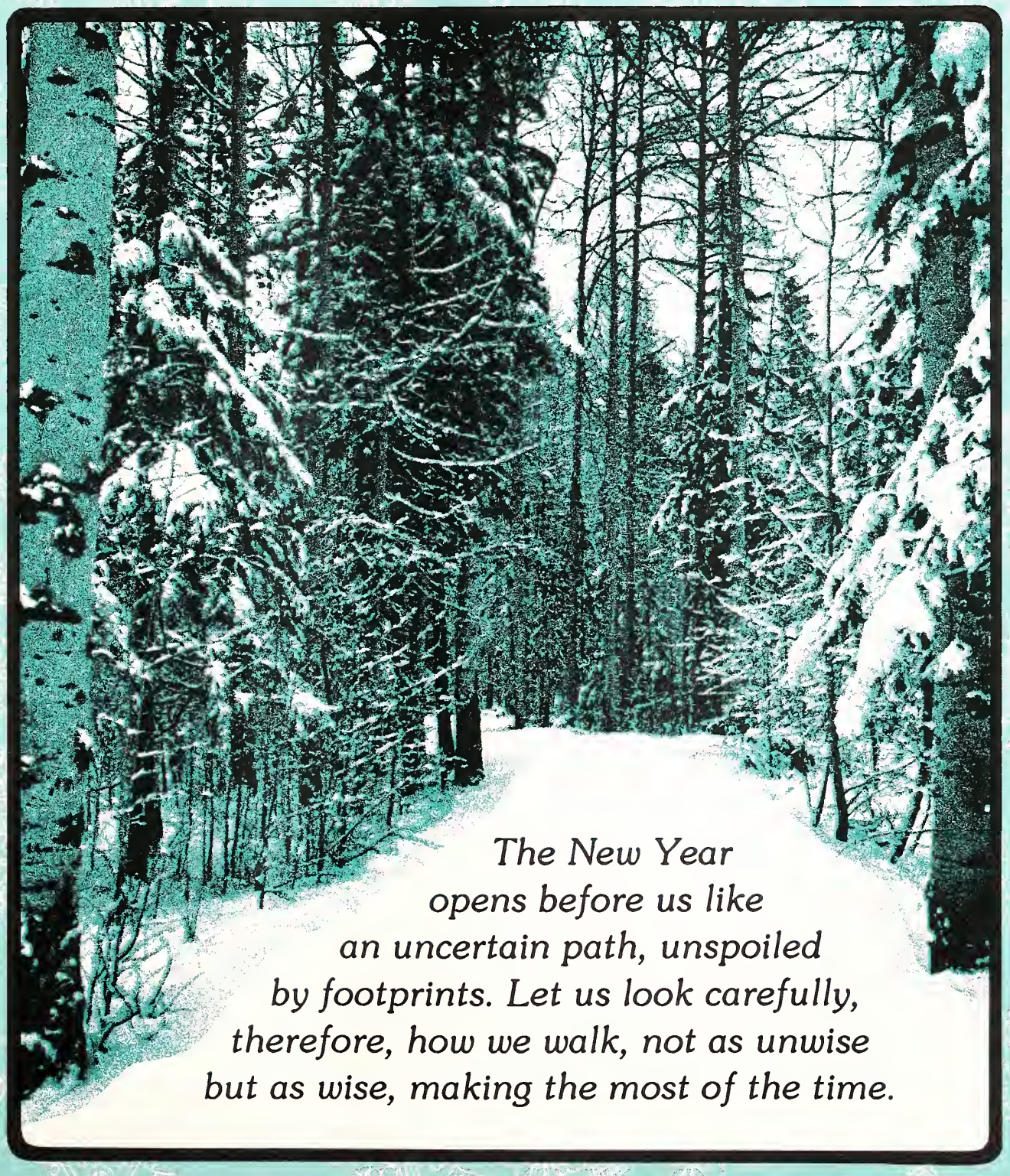

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THE BRETHREN
Evangelist
JANUARY 1994



The New Year opens before us like an uncertain path, unspoiled by footprints. Let us look carefully, therefore, how we walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the most of the time.

My New Year's Resolutions

Written tongue-in-cheek
by Editor Richard C. Winfield

I'VE DECIDED not to pay the rent on our house this year. Finances are a little tight just now (I guess we overextended ourselves a little in 1993!), and the only way I can see to make ends meet is to stop paying the rent. This way I figure that by the end of the year, we can be pretty well caught up financially, and perhaps we can even put a little in savings for 1995.

Not paying the rent might get me into trouble with the landlord, but I hear he's a nice person, so I think he'll understand. Anyway, he's loaded, so he won't need the money. He has rental houses all over, I hear. Actually, I've never met the man (he lives in another state; I rented the house through an agency), but this is what I've heard about him.

I don't mean to say that I'm not going to pay anything for the use of the house. I'll kick in a few bucks a month, and if I feel particularly generous around the holidays, I may chip in a bit more. And if I hear that the landlord really needs the money—some of his houses get washed away in a flood or something—then I may shell out a few big bucks. But I just can't handle that regular monthly payment this year. If things start looking up, maybe I can do better on down the road—in 1995 or 96.

The silent treatment

I've also decided not to talk to my wife in 1994. But this is for an entirely different reason. It just takes too much of my time! There never seem to be enough hours in the day to accomplish everything I need to get done. So I think I can save some time by cutting out conversations with my wife. To be sure, there may be some side benefits! She always wants to talk when I'm reading the paper or during the most exciting parts of a sports event on television or during one of my favorite TV programs.

I don't mean to say that I won't talk to my dear wife at all. I'll say a few words to her now and then, particularly at meals. "Great meal, Honey. Please pass the potatoes, would you? Thanks for baking the pie." Or if I need something, I'll have to break the silence. "Honey, would you iron me a shirt?" And if I get sick and can't get out of bed, I might find that I'll have to call on her quite often to help me.

It's not that I don't love my wife, you understand. I love her a lot! It's just this time thing. I've got to find a way to deal with the time crunch.

A no-food diet

For the same reason (the time crunch), I've also made another New Year's resolution. I've decided to stop eating meals on a regular basis in 1994. This will also save me some money (not to mention getting rid of some of that flab around my middle). But my main reason for not eating is to save time. Just think how much time we spend each day eating!

Of course, I'll probably get pretty hungry. And after I use up the stored fat, I may start looking awfully thin. I even run the risk of getting sick. But that's the chance I'll have to take.

Besides, it's not as if I won't eat at all. I'll grab a bite here and there from time to time, particularly when other people are eating. (Might even be tempted to snitch something from their plates!) And I may eat an occasional meal on Sundays. But no more regular three meals a day. I just can't spare the time.

My rationale

You may be thinking that these three resolutions are pretty far out. But I was talking to a man the other day (he seemed like a sensible fellow), and what he had to say seemed similar to what I'm planning for 1994.

This man said that even though he is a Christian and attends church regularly, he can't afford to tithe or even to make a pledge to the church. His financial situation is just too tight. The best he can do is put in a couple of bucks a week and occasionally respond to a special appeal.

He also said that while he loves the Lord and believes in the power of prayer, he just can't seem to find time to do much more than say grace at meals—except perhaps when he needs something from the Lord or gets sick. He just can't fit it into his hectic schedule

The same is true of Bible-reading. He said he stands firm on the inspiration and authority of the Bible, but he can hardly ever find time to read it, except on Sundays during Sunday school and the worship service. We had a long conversation about these things while we were waiting our turns at the bowling alley.

A simple solution

So I thought, "If this guy can pull this off in his Christian life, why can't I do the same in my everyday affairs?" I could probably find other ways to get my financial house in order (cut up the credit cards, start living within my means). And I might be able to find other ways to deal with the time crunch. (I thought about cutting back on my TV-watching and limiting my social activities, but this seemed a bit too radical!) No, these three resolutions appear to me to provide the simplest solution.

So I'll give them a try for a year. Next January I'll tell you how they worked out—that is, if I survive 1994! [⇧]

A Belated Farewell

For the past ten years it has been my pleasure—first on a monthly basis (1984-85), then bimonthly—to prepare for publication the column "Developing a Global Vision" by John Maust. I always found John's articles interesting, well-written, and worthwhile. Sometimes he stepped on my toes, but that was all right.

A product of the Nappanee, Ind., First Brethren Church, John was serving as a missionary in Peru with Latin America Mission when he began writing the column. He later became editor of that mission's magazine, the *Latin America Evangelist*, a position he still holds (in addition to handling other responsibilities for the mission).

John's column will not appear in *The Brethren Evangelist* in 1994. Discontinuing the column was a difficult decision, but after ten years it seemed time to make a change and to give John a rest. The final column in his series appeared in the November 1993 issue.

I wish to express publicly my appreciation to John for his insightful writing during the past ten years. Thank you, John, for helping us "Develop a Global Vision."

— Editor Dick Winfield

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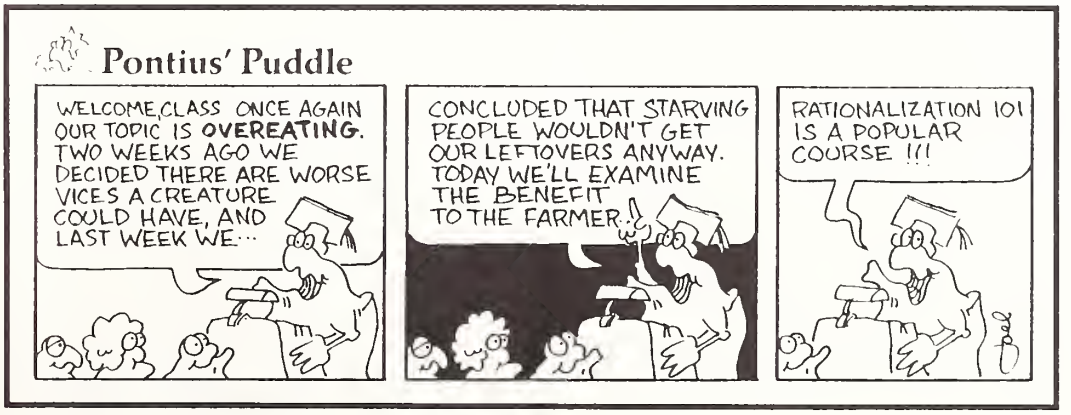
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Answers to the Little Crusader page:
There are many possible answers to these questions. What do *you* think?





Understanding the Bible

Christ, the Center of Scripture

By William H. Kerner

THE PURPOSE of Scripture is to lead people to the Lord Jesus Christ. This purpose was expressed by Christ Himself when He said to the Pharisees, "You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me . . . " (John 5:39*).

The Apostle Paul, in writing to Timothy, lays out the same salvation purpose: ". . . from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:15–17).

A practical purpose

These verses suggest that the Scriptures have a practical purpose, and that this purpose is moral and relational rather than just intellectual, because the Scriptures lead us to faith in Christ and instruct us about how we are to live as His committed disciples. We believe, therefore, that what God has done in Jesus Christ (the gospel) should be the starting point and our center as we approach Scripture.

The Brethren interpreted their faith and experience through "being in Christ." They began with the study of the Scriptures and the power of the Holy Spirit. Alexander Mack and his followers pondered the pages of Scripture to discover just what they had to say and then were brave enough to live by those teachings, come what may. They believed that their faith and experience must center on their relationship to the living Christ. They, with the Anabaptists and Pietists, saw Christ as the central theme of the Scriptures.

The method Christ taught

Brethren believe in a Christ-centered approach to Scripture because Christ Himself taught this principle. In His debate with the Pharisees, Jesus said, "These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life. . . . If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?" (John 5:39–40, 46–47). Jesus was saying that since they had missed the Living Word—Jesus Christ, Himself—they had missed the whole point of the written word.

After the resurrection, during the "Trip Through the Scriptures in Seven Miles" on the road to Emmaus, Jesus told two discouraged disciples how all the Scriptures spoke of Him. "And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself" (Luke 24:27).

A little while later, the Risen Christ said to a wider audience, "'This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.' Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures" (Luke 24:44–45). Jesus was asserting that not only did the Scriptures bear witness to Him in a general way, but also that in each of the three divisions of the Old Testament—the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings—there were things that spoke of Him and that all these thing must be fulfilled in Him.

Christ, the unifying connection

The apostles saw the essential witness of the Old Testament as a witness to the Lord Jesus Christ. This theme runs throughout the entire New Testament, making Christ the unifying connection between the two testaments. What was promised in the Old is fulfilled in the New.

Note the testimony of Philip. He met a eunuch who was reading Isaiah 53. "Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus" (Acts. 8:35). The Apostle Paul likewise made the connection of promise to fulfillment to believers at Thessalonica. ". . . he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead" (Acts 17:2–3).

The Apostle Peter preached the same message in Jerusalem. He said,

*Quotations from the Bible are from the *New International Version.*

Rev. Kerner is a retired pastor and the former Director of Pastoral Ministries for The Brethren Church. He is a member of The Brethren Church's Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication, which is preparing this series of articles on "Understanding the Bible."

Correspondence Welcomed

The members of the General Conference Executive Council's Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication invite readers to suggest topics or Bible passages to discuss in future articles in this column. Send questions, comments, or suggestions to the committee in care of The Brethren Evangelist, 524 College Ave., Ashland, OH 44805.

"Now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders. But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Christ would suffer" (Acts 3:17–18). We find that whatever Christ did, the New Testament regarded as having been predicted in the Old.

The Old Testament looks forward to the coming of a redeemer to restore humankind's broken relationship with God. The New Testament introduces us to that redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ. We see, then, that in Christ we are confronted with the full revelation of God.

Some 16 centuries ago, Augustine explained the relationship of the two testaments in this way: "The New is in the Old contained; the Old is by the New explained." We find, then, that both the Old Testament and the New Testament are necessary for a full understanding of what God in Christ has done for our salvation, our life as His disciples, and our hope for a future residence in heaven.

Christ, the standard of truth

Christ is the center of the Scriptures in the sense that the Old Testament prophets told of His coming and the New Testament apostles interpreted the meaning of His life, teachings, death, and resurrection. But He is also the center of the Scriptures in the sense that He is the absolute center and standard of Christian truth. Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6). Paul states:

> He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. . . . For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and though him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. *Col. 1:15, 19–20*

The author of the letter to the Hebrews sees Jesus Christ as the full and final revelation of God.

> In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. *Heb. 1:1–3*

Sound principles of understanding the Scriptures, therefore, require seeing Christ as the center and culmination of Scripture.

A motivating conviction

The Christ-centered Scriptures became the motivating conviction for the Brethren. Alexander Mack and his followers committed themselves to obedience to all the commands of Christ. This, they believed constituted the evidence of a saving faith and proof of true Christian love.

This theological base is repeated throughout our history. The 1815 *Minutes of Annual Meeting* stated, "We labor to be obedient to the Gospel of Jesus by the Grace of God." Later, Henry Kurtz said, "We find the perfect Law only in Christ and His teaching." Shortly before the three-way split in 1882, Henry Holsinger, the leader of the Progressive Brethren (later called The Brethren Church), stated in *The Progressive Christian* of October 8, 1880: "The Gospel of Christ is our only and all-sufficient rule of faith and practice."

Holsinger's slogan was, "Read the Gospel, Obey the Gospel, and Preach the Gospel." He also noted that Jesus said, "My Brethren are those which hear the Word and do it" (Luke 8:21). And he went further to state, "If hearing the Word of God and doing it makes men brothers, the brethren of Christ, it makes them altogether good enough to be our brethren; and if we hear and obey the Word it should make us good enough for fellowship with the church of Christ."

The "Declaration of Principles" adopted at the first convention of the Progressive Brethren, held June 29–30, 1882, states: "We hold that in religion the gospel of Christ and the gospel alone, is a sufficient rule of faith and practice; that he who adds to the gospel, takes from it, or in any way binds upon men anything different from the gospel, is an infidel to the Author of Christianity and a usurper of gospel rights."

Claude Studebaker, General Conference Moderator in 1940, laid out to that Conference: "Now the Brethren Church has set herself to obey all the commands of Christ. . . . If we are to give to the world our contribution as a church, we must continue to teach obedience to Christ. I am quite convinced that the future growth and usefulness of our church lies in faithfully preaching our message rather than trying to compromise our historic faith with some popular interpretation to secure a larger following."

Costly discipleship

Taking the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the principle for interpreting Scripture has given us our distinctive beliefs. It is the desire to obey all the teachings of Christ that gives us our view of costly discipleship. Early Brethren had no room for an "invisible" church. They taught that the church was as visible as every believer's life. Brethren saw the body of Christ as made up of those who turn their backs on sin and take the cross of discipleship as their way of life. Our Brethren youth have it right when they sing, "If you don't bear the cross, then you can't wear the crown."

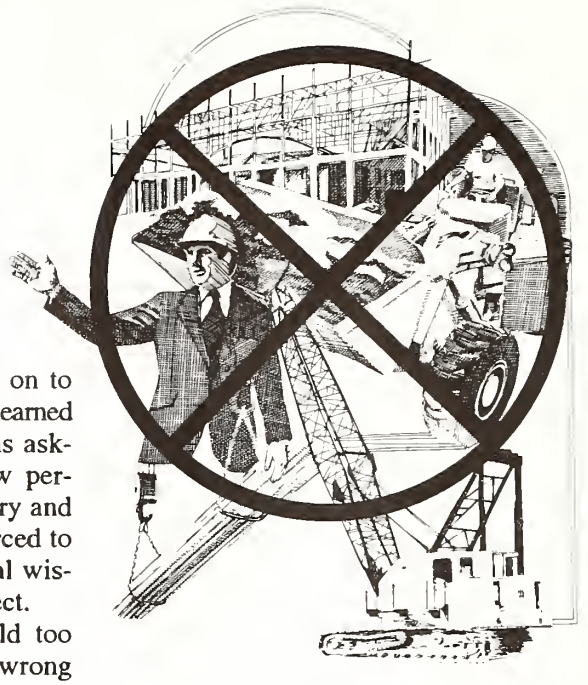
Taking Christ as the principle of interpretation and obeying His teachings brought the Brethren to lay stress on the examination before Communion, and also on feetwashing and the Love Feast as well as the Bread and Cup. It also brought us the practice of nonconformity, nonresistance, and nonswearing as a way of life.

One of the main things that bind us together as Brethren is our Christ-centered view of Scripture. This principle of interpretation is basic to hearing God speak to us today and to telling others what God has done in Jesus Christ. What better can we do than proclaim that Christ is both the "key" to and the "Lord" of the Scriptures, and set ourselves to teach what Christ taught? [⇧]

An architect's unconventional wisdom for the growing church:

When *Not* to Build

By Ray Bowman with Eddy Hall



WHEN a suburban Philadelphia congregation asked me to design a 1,000-seat sanctuary, that's exactly what I intended to do. They had called for the usual reasons: their sanctuary was full and they were running out of educational space. It was time to build.

To determine how best to design their facility, I first met with the church board for four hours on a Saturday morning. Next I spent several days studying the church's ministries, finances, and use of facilities. Finally, I felt as though I had the facts I needed to draft my proposal.

I met with the board again the following Saturday. "What you really need to build," I announced, "is a storage shed."

Had the church invited me a year and a half earlier, I would have designed a 1,000-seat sanctuary and cheered them on. "The building will bring more people to Christ," I'd have said. "Its beauty will draw you closer to God. People will notice you're here and that you're an important part of the community."

During 30 years of designing church buildings, I'd heard all these claims from pastors and church boards. I'd seen no reason not to accept their assumption that bigger buildings translated into greater ministry. But then I began church consulting work. It was this new hat I was wearing—consultant rather than architect —that made the difference.

As an architect my job had been to design the kind of building the church people expected. As a consultant, I studied this fast-growing congregation through new eyes and came to a startling conclusion: a major building program at that time would in all likelihood have stopped the church's growth and created financial bondage for years to come.

Ray Bowman is a church consultant who lives in Larkspur, Colorado. Eddy Hall is a free-lance writer from Goessel, Kansas. This article was adapted by the authors from their book, ***When Not to Build: An Architect's Unconventional Wisdom for the Growing Church*** *(Baker Book House, 1992).*

Over the next ten years I went on to consult with scores of churches and learned from each of them. Because I was asking facility questions from a new perspective, the perspective of ministry and outreach, time after time I was forced to rethink some point of conventional wisdom I had embraced as an architect.

Most churches, I realized, build too big, build too soon, or build the wrong kind of building. It was painful for me to admit that I had encouraged these misguided practices, and that for 30 years much of my well-intentioned advice had actually hurt the churches I had worked with.

These hard lessons eventually pushed me to a conclusion so unconventional that it sounds like architectural heresy: most churches thinking of building shouldn't, at least not yet. I became convinced, in fact, that the single most valuable lesson a church can learn about building is *when not to build.* And that lesson can be summarized in three parts —three situations in which a church should not build.

Scrutinize Motives

First, a church should not build if its reasons for building are wrong. Years ago a church of about 150 people in Arkansas hired me as an architect to design a new sanctuary for them. When I saw their building, I was puzzled. Though the building was older, its location was good and the congregation had never filled it.

Finally, I asked the pastor, "Why do you want a new building?"

"The first reason," he answer, "is that these people haven't done anything significant for 25 years. This is a way to get them to do something significant.

"Second, the people aren't giving at anywhere near the level they could or should be. A building program would motivate them to give more.

"Third, a building program will unite the people behind a common goal."

I believed he was right on all three counts, and I designed the sanctuary. Now I know that this pastor was trying to do something that never works—solve non-building problems with a building. That church built for the wrong reasons.

Seek Other Alternatives

Second, a church should not build when there is a better way to meet space needs. As I studied the Philadelphia church, I agreed at once that it had a space problem. At its rate of growth, the congregation would soon outgrow its worship space. Between Sunday school and their Christian school, their educational space was full. They had no room for additional staff offices. Building was the obvious solution.

But the wrong one. "I found a room filled with missionary boxes," I told the board. "Now those boxes don't need heat. They don't need lighting. They don't need windows or carpet, do they?" I recommended a low-cost storage and maintenance building to free up existing space for educational use.

"This barn on your property is a historic structure," I told them. "It's worth preserving. But you're not getting good use out of it." Then we discussed how they could remodel it into a gymnasium, kitchen, and educational space at half the cost of a comparable new structure.

"You can meet your need for worship space for years to come," I went on, "without the tremendous commitment of time, energy, and money involved in building a new sanctuary." The wall between the existing sanctuary and foyer could be removed to enlarge the worship area. A modest addition could provide a new, larger foyer, one that would

make it practical to hold two Sunday morning services, immediately doubling the worship seating capacity. The new addition could also house the office space the church would soon need for its growing staff.

Finally, I suggested that they replace their fixed worship seating with movable seating. For the comparatively low cost of new chairs, the church could use the largest single space in the building for a wide range of activities—space that would otherwise lie useless for all but a few hours a week.

The church adopted the suggestions, completing its remodeling and modest construction projects within a couple of years. The congregation continued to reach out to the unchurched and within six years grew from 300 to 850.

What would have happened if the church had moved ahead with its original building plans? The growth histories of other churches suggest the answer.

A fast-growing church launches a major building program to create space for more growth, taking on heavy debt. Though not by design, the building program becomes the congregation's focus. People give correspondingly less attention to the outreach ministries that have been producing growth. Church attendance peaks, drops slightly, and levels off. Its mindset now changed from growth to maintenance, the church may continue for decades with no significant growth. Whenever the church seeks creative alternatives to building prematurely, however, "people ministry" can go on uninterrupted and growth can continue.

It was at the Philadelphia church that I first began to realize that of the many churches that had hired me to design new buildings, few actually needed them. What most needed was to find ways to use their existing buildings more effectively. What seems obvious to me now came then as a fresh revelation: until a church is fully using the space it has, it doesn't need more.

Minimize Debt

Third, a church should not build when building would increase the risk of financial bondage. When the Philadelphia church commissioned my study, it was still in debt for the existing building. The congregation planned to borrow most of the money for the new building, but the loan payment would have been larger than the existing congregation could have met. The church's ability to repay the loan depended on future growth.

I recommended that this congregation convert its finances onto a provision plan, living within the income God provided. This means first paying off the existing mortgage. Then they would do the necessary remodeling and build their modest additions on a cash basis.

Operating on provision would mean setting aside regularly for future facility needs so that the congregation could pay cash for most or all of its next building. The many thousands of dollars saved on interest would be freed up for the church's true work—ministering to people.

The church followed this plan, paying off its debt and expanding its facilities on a cash basis. Then the congregation began setting aside funds regularly so that it could pay cash for an anticipated building program in five years.

Because it is not saddled with debt, this church has been free to invest more and more money in ministry to people, including its Christian school and a multi-faceted inner-city mission in a nearby neighborhood.

When to Build

But there is a time to build. When pastor and people have come to see buildings merely as tools and nothing more, the church passes the *motivation* test.

When a church is so fully utilizing its facilities that it can find no alternative less costly in time, energy, and money than building, it passes the *need* test.

And when a church is living within the income God has provided and can build without resorting to borrowing or dipping into funds needed for ministry to people, the church passes the *financial readiness* test.

When a church wants to build for the right reasons, has no less costly alternatives, and has the funds to build without borrowing or taking funds from ministry—then and only then is it time to build. [⇧]

15 Questions to Answer Before You Build

1. Do you expect a new building to attract new people to the church?
2. Is it your goal to design a building that will inspire people to worship?
3. Do you expect your members to be more motivated to reach out to others once you have a new building?
4. Do you think a building program will motivate your people to give more generously to the work of the church?
5. Do you expect the building program to unify your people behind a significant challenge?
6. Do you hope that a building program will involve more people in the work of the church?
7. Do you see the building as a way to make a statement to the community about the church's importance?
8. Do you hope that a new building will help your people take more pride in their church?
9. Do you need a larger sanctuary so the entire congregation can worship together at one time?
10. Do you need to add more educational space so all your classes can meet at once?
11. Is it possible that space needs could be met through more creative use of present facilities?
12. Are you still paying debt on your last building?
13. Would you have to borrow a major part of the finances for a building program?
14. Would paying for the project depend on the church's future growth?
15. To help pay for the building, would you explore ways to cut spending on your present ministry programs or staffing?

Add up your answers. Every *yes* or *maybe* is a possible reason not to build, to delay building, or to seek another more appropriate solution through prayer, research, and re-evaluation.

Questions 1 through 8 relate to motivations for building. A congregation that has *yes* or *maybe* answers here may be in danger of trying to meet non-building needs with a building program.

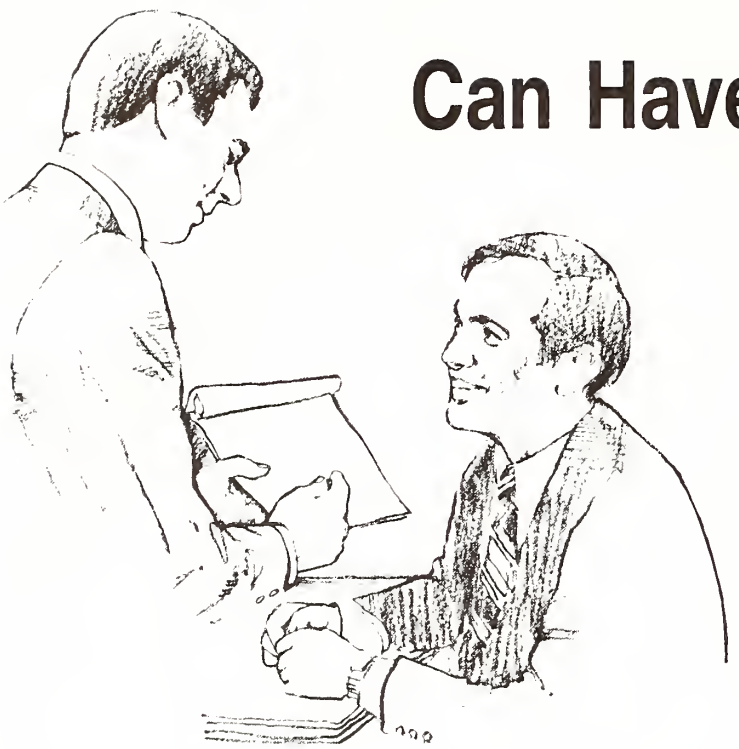
Questions 9 through 11 deal with how best to meet space needs. A congregation with *yes* or *maybe* answers here probably doesn't need to build yet, but can grow through making fuller use of existing facilities until future growth makes building truly necessary.

Questions 12 through 15 address financial readiness. A congregation with *yes* or *maybe* answers here needs to implement plans to pay off debt and save for future facility needs so future building will not require borrowing or dipping into funds needed for ministry.

Adapted from *When Not to Build: An Architect's Unconventional Wisdom for the Growing Church* by Ray Bowman with Eddy Hall (Baker, 1992) Used by permission.

A Common Interest Can Have an Eternal Impact!

By John Parrish



MARTY met Phil and his family last May at the office picnic. As they talked they discovered they had much in common. Both were successful in the sales division for their company. They had both graduated from the same college with the same degree. Both enjoyed tennis, fishing, and gardening. Marty did discover one major difference between the two of them, however; he was a committed Christian and Phil was not.

In the months that followed, their friendship grew. They played tennis together every Thursday. They went to the annual State Garden Show together to glean new ideas for use in their favorite pastime.

Marty wanted to share Christ with Phil, but he wasn't sure how to broach the subject with him. One day he discovered a way.

His church sponsored a lunch featuring a salesman he and Phil both admired. The salesman was a committed Christian and shared the story of his success. Marty attended, but Phil had to be out of town that day.

The speaker shared that he had spent his life pursuing success. He said that even though he had accomplished many things, he still was missing a sense of personal peace and satisfaction. It wasn't until he met Christ that the pieces of his life came together and he found true success.

An idea hit Marty. Why not get the tape of this event and use it as a basis of discussion with Phil? Phil was always looking for ways to better himself. He would give the tape to Phil and they could discuss it after tennis on Thursdays.

It worked out easier than Marty thought. Phil was interested in listening to the tape. Marty wrote several questions for their discussion based on the speaker's comments. These served as natural springboards into spiritual issues. It was a natural bridge to talk to Phil about Christ. Phil and Marty talked openly on a level they had never talked before.

What are the Advantages of *Discussion Evangelism?*

- *Discussion Evangelism* builds on a point of expressed interest. You become a facilitator in the other person's field of interest.
- It provides a natural transition to discuss spiritual issues.
- It is an interactive dialog over questions instead of a monologue.
- Multiple conversations build strong bridges of relationship.
- Many "one shot" gospel presentations leave the relationship awkwardly hanging when you call for commitment and the person is not ready. In *Discussion Evangelism* you have many opportunities left to discuss Christ. Numerous books and tapes of interest are available for continued discussion.
- It can be done with a group or with one person, offering flexibility.

How do I go about it?

First, get to know your friend. What does this person get excited about? Sports? Work? Family? Marriage? Money? Success? Look for the person's interests.

Next, look for Christian role models in these areas who have something of significance to say. For example: Baseball — Orel Hirsheizer; Marriage and Family — James Dobson; Business — Jack Eckerd; Sales — Zig Ziglar.

Review what you plan to give the person beforehand. Make sure the author has something worthwhile to say and that he or she will "connect" with your friend.

As you read, prayerfully look for quotes you think will be helpful for your friend. These can serve as springboards for questions.

Approach your friend and say something like: "As I listened to this tape, I thought you would enjoy it. I'd like to talk about your impressions after you listen to it."

Be sure to draw out your friend's interest and don't dominate the conversation. Hold each discussion to under one hour. If your friend is responsive and wants to know more about the secret to this person's success, purpose, or peace of mind, then you've opened the door for the gospel and to an entirely different level of friendship. [⇧]

Reprinted—at the suggestion of the Brethren Church's National Coordinator for Passing On the Promise—from ***Friendly Witnesses****, the newsletter of Serve International. Used by permission.*

We Would Not Need To Discuss Stewardship *IF* . . .

By Donald R. Brown

IF every evangelical Christian tithed, no evangelical church would ever have any financial problem.

IF all evangelical Christians gave as God prospered them, churches would not find 20 percent of the congregation giving 80 percent of all funds received.

IF each evangelical Christian gave as God prospered him or her, churches would not report that up to 50 percent of those attending regularly never give anything through the local church.

IF every evangelical Christian tithed, the hundreds of candidates waiting to go to the missions field could be fully funded.

IF any evangelical Christian ever experienced giving to God's work first, regardless of his or her financial situation, that person would soon experience the blessings of giving . . . and receiving.

IF evangelical Christians gave a proportional share of their time and effort to God, churches might have to find new projects for all the volunteers.

IF evangelicals showed as much concern about the practical aspect of the stewardship of our earth's atmosphere as they do about the teaching of creationism in public schools, non-evangelicals might become aware that the universe actually is God's creation.

IF evangelical Christians ever learn the "joy of giving," they may stop debating whether the tithe is 10 percent of the gross or 10 percent of the net.

IF all evangelical Christians put spiritual matters before material goods, evangelical churches would soon have no financial problems at all.

IF those who prepare fund requests for evangelical causes were as dependent on the guidance of the Holy Spirit as on clever phrases, exaggerated needs, or celebrity endorsements, evangelical Christians might respond with more that two or three percent of their gross income.

IF all fund appeals by evangelical organizations were truly biblically based and spiritually motivated, evangelical Christians might give much more eagerly.

IF all funds given by evangelical Christians were handled carefully and prayerfully by responsible administrators, Christian organizations would have fewer needs.

IF evangelical Christians gave as much money to God's work as they spend on entertainment (TVs, VCRs, camcorders, video tape rentals, movies, records, books, etc.), it would likely far exceed the amount of the tithe.

IF all evangelical Christians made judicious use of credit cards and charge accounts (perhaps even eliminating them), they would have more funds available for the Lord's work.

IF you are beginning to tire of the word stewardship, remember it is simply shorthand for "God will one day hold you accountable for all the money, talent, and brains he has given to you." [†]

_IF_ all evangelical Christians put spiritual matters before material goods, evangelical churches would soon have no financial problems at all.

Mr. Brown is editor of United Evangelical Action *magazine, a publication of the National Association of Evangelicals.*

This article originally appeared in the March–April 1990 issue of Action *magazine. It is reprinted here at the suggestion of the former Stewardship Commission of The Brethren Church. It is used by permission.*

Readers' Forum

A column in which readers can share their thoughts and views with the Brethren.

Theology and Change

I BELIEVE that God allows His church to be divided into various denominations because He has chosen to reveal Himself at different times to different groups of His people in new and unique ways. He enlightens them to a particular aspect of His being and entrusts them with that specific truth. These groups or denominations have a legitimate place in Christ's universal church as long as they remain true to their specific revelation, holding out their particular vision while standing together with other Christians on the basic principles of Christian faith.

We must be true to our vision

For us as Brethren to justify our existence, for us to be blessed by God, I believe we must be true to the vision of church and community that God has given us. We must by voice and action display our tradition. Our preaching and our practice must reflect our unique understanding of God and His plan for His people. Our organization and polity must be in line with our theology.

God's revelation is not static, but progressive. He continues to reveal Himself in new and exciting ways. I am sure we will never know the vast fullness of all God's being until we are finally transformed. Until that day, as God continues to reveal Himself on earth, theologies will change; they will grow. New revelation builds on old; our picture is enlarged. God blesses us with new vision as we in turn hold out the vision to the world.

In this world, wherever there is life, there is change. Our culture and society change around us. For a church to effectively communicate its vision, it must adapt; some things need to change. But for its survival as a church tradition, it is vital that theological changes be founded only in new revelation from God.

The early Brethren were not afraid of change; in fact, becoming static was what they feared most. Progressive Brethren believed in a growing understanding of God's revelation. They believed that they had a God-given process for discerning truth. They had a process for change. God's will was to be determined by the community of believers as they, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, studied the word of God together. The hermeneutic community is fundamental to The Brethren Church's particular piece of the Christian puzzle, a major part of our reason to exist today.

At the present time, The Brethren Church is going through change. We need change in order to remain relevant to the world around us. It is equally important, however, that we remain true to our God-given tradition. In order to maintain our valid place in the diversified church of Jesus Christ, we Brethren must continue to preach and practice our particular vision of church and community as we work through the process of change. We must change only according to the guidelines of our own tradition, according to our specific understanding of God and His people.

Some important questions

As we change today, we must ask ourselves several questions. First, we must ask if the process of change we are using is consistent with our established tradition, our view of community, our theology? But even more important, we must ask what the consequences will be if we violate our God-given process for change. Can our practice go against our theology? Will God bless us if we operate outside the revelation and vision He has give us?

Our shift toward centralized church leadership and authority is a major shift in Brethren practice and thought. We are on the verge of a major change in our theology. I am concerned because I am not convinced that the changes are a result of new revelation from God to His people. I am not convinced because I have not seen the change come from the congregation of believers as they study God's word together. I do not think that the process of change we are going through is in line with our theology. An even greater concern, however, is that the shift to centralization will endanger our traditional channel for receiving new revelation, the hermeneutic community. We are in danger not only of losing God's blessing but also of cutting off our communication with Him.

We must seek the will of God

Change will come to The Brethren Church, but it must not be change originated or dominated by our human wisdom or worldly understanding. Now is the time for us Brethren to increase our searching for the will of God. We must intensify our praying. We need to revitalize the hermeneutic community. We as a community of believers are bound by our nature to turn to God for new light as we sense a need for change. If we allow God to control us, I believe He will continue to bless The Brethren Church. But if we abandon our God-given vision of the Christ who speaks through church and community, we put our reason to exist in Christ's universal church in jeopardy.

Let us look to our Lord as we search for new ways to reach out to the lost in the light of our growing and God-given tradition.

MARK LOGAN
Bridgewater, Va.

Rev. Logan, a former Brethren missionary, currently pastors the 340 Brethren Church near Elkton, Va.

We must never forget that the primary reason God gave us prophecies about the future was to help us live faithfully in the present—not to satisfy our curiosity about what is going to happen.

*—From **Spiritual Living in a Secular World** by Ajith Fernando (ZondervanPublishingHouse, 1993)*

The Woman's Outlook Newsletter

A publication of the Brethren Woman's Missionary Society

January–February 1994 Volume 7, Number 3

The President's Pen

Dear Ladies,

Psalm 118:1 says, "Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever." As I write this, Thanksgiving has passed and we look forward to Christmas and celebrating the birth of Jesus. The thankfulness we are feeling now needs to carry on in our daily lives through Christmas and the months to follow. We have so much to be thankful for each day. Let's try to start each day with a thankful heart.

As I was reading through some old *Outlook* magazines, I ran across a list of Prayer Reminders in a 1970 copy. It read:

Let us thank God for the old year just past, for the joys and disappointments which have helped to make our faith stronger.

Let us thank God for bringing us to another year of service and may He grant us wisdom and grace to meet whatever tests may come.

Let us thank God for His universe with all of its many wonders which only God can understand, but for the small part which man has been permitted to explore through the space program.

Remember the missionaries in every field of endeavor. They need added strength, especially when far from family and loved ones.

Ask God for special grace to raise our children in this world of confusion and misunderstanding.

These prayer reminders were written in 1970, but are so very applicable even in 1993. Spend time on these, and then remember to thank the Lord for all of our blessings.

So far, we have had four months of programs from our devotional books. Are you using the Roll Calls? My circle at Park Street is, and we are having a good time with them. One of the other WMS circles is inviting the high school girls of the church to their December meeting. This is a good way to intro-

(continued on page 4)

The Song of the Witness

Devotions given by Charlene Rowser August 4, 1993, at the WMS Conference

As part of my morning devotions each day, I have gotten into the habit of reading at least one of the Psalms—those beautiful songs of the Bible. In the middle of the Psalms is a series which are called Songs of Ascents. The dictionary defines ascent as the act of rising or mounting upward. Bible scholars believe these were sung by the Jewish pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem for one of the feast days. It may be that at certain spots the pilgrims would stop and sing one of the Psalms.

We all recall the beautiful words of the 121st Psalm: "I lift up my eyes to the hills—where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the maker of heaven and earth." And from Psalm 130, we are comforted by the words, "Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD; O Lord, hear my voice. Let your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy."

Today let us focus on the 126th Psalm. There are a number of truths we can focus on as we consider our theme of witnessing with power.

First of all, we see the people praising God for His goodness to them. "When the LORD brought back the captives to Zion, we were like men who dreamed. Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. Then it was said among the nations, 'The LORD has done great things for them.' The LORD has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy. Restore our fortunes, O LORD, like streams in the Negev." God truly had blessed them, even though they were not faithful to Him.

Now let us take a look at the song of a witness. "Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy. He who goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him."

Look at the *task* the Psalm sets forth. We are to go out as sowers. Jesus spoke of the sower in His parables. It was a common sight in the countryside to see a person take seed from a basket and sow it in the field. As a little girl, I used to follow my grandfather around as he "broadcast" seeds from a box he carried filled with seeds. He would turn a crank and a fan-like contraption would scatter the seeds on the prepared land. We can understand what the Psalmist means when he sings about the task of the witness around the figure of sowing seed in a field. Jesus commissioned us, "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."

This is our mandate from heaven—our number one assignment from the Captain of our salvation.

Not only is there the *task* but also the *tears.* This may seem a little unusual for a sower. He wept as he sowed. We have stifled tears in our day. Somehow we have gotten the idea that crying isn't cool, and we have relegated emotionalism to that loud church down the street. Maybe that is why we are winning so few people to the Lord; there are so few of us who have broken hearts for the lost. I have been a pastor's wife for over 40 years and I have seen many, many people come to know the Lord and, cool or not, tears still slide down my cheeks when someone comes forward. I may be so choked up that I have difficulty singing the closing song, but that's okay—there is joy in heaven as well as here on earth! Leaf through your Bible and see that the most effective leaders were not ashamed to cry and shed tears for their people—Moses, Jeremiah, Paul, Timothy, and, yes, Jesus Himself. May God give us tears again and hearts broken over the lost of the world.

In the Word there are many figures

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The Song of the Witness *(cont. from p. 1)*

of speech for the Bible itself. It is compared to a sword, a song, a statute, but in this Psalm it is compared to a seed and it is the *treasure* we bear. We have to sow the seed for a spiritual harvest. There is no other way. We may try to substitute all kinds of things for the Word of God, but it won't work. We can't plant jelly beans and expect to reap corn. Neither can we rely on psychology, philosophy, rationalism, and entertainment to reap souls. They just don't work—it takes the seed, the Word of God—to reach lost souls.

What happens when we sow the seed of the Word with tears? We have a promise of a harvest. "He who goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy." What a triumph! What a thrill! God never promised that you would win everyone you witness to; He just said to do it! Remember Noah preached for 120 years, but the only ones he got into his ark were his family.

Our verses tell us we will be bringing *trophies* with us—"carrying sheaves with him." In biblical times, when harvest time came, the grain was cut, tied in bundles, and laid in the path to be carried to the threshing floor. Today, we are wrapping souls with the cords of God's grace and laying them along the path to Glory, awaiting the Lord of the harvest to carry them to the threshing floor of Glory.

Can we think in closing about a modern-day harvest?

Excitement swells in the brisk autumn air in northern Indiana. It is harvest time. Out-of-state drivers pull over to admire the rolling fields filled with hay bales as big as cars. The new-mown hay perfumes the air with fragrances of clover and grass. In one field a big combine spews out golden grain into a truck. Across the road, an Amish farmer in his straw hat patiently rides his harvester pulled by horses. Both are achieving the same goal, but in different manners. A

(continued on page 4)

SEE THIS



From Joan, the Sewing and World Relief Coordinator: Many of you have sent quilt squares since we quilted at the 1992 National Conference. If you haven't and would like to send some, or if you already have and would like to make more, here are the quilt square guidelines:

- Please make the squares at least 8½" square.
- The design should be less than 8" and centered on the square.
- All-cotton fabric is preferable.
- No liquid embroidery or fabric paints, please. The quality of the quilted items is enhanced by the needlework—embroidery, applique, cross stitch, etc.
- Please send all squares to me by April 30, 1994.

If you have any ideas or suggestions for the quilt squares, please let me know. Hopefully, we will have enough to make a quilt for 1994's conference.

God bless you,

Joan Merrill (317-289-2384)
9300 S. St. Rt. 3
Muncie, IN 47302

AND THIS

From JoAnn, treasurer:

Do you have questions about the National WMS's finances and policies? Would you like to learn the details and the histories behind the numbers?

The national board is preparing a paper that examines the specifics of WMS finances. You may request your copy directly from me. We also welcome additional questions for the publication.

JoAnn Seaman (419-281-0027)
1314 Davis Road
Ashland, Ohio 44805

THE WOMAN'S OUTLOOK NEWSLETTER

Published bimonthly in January, March, May, July, September, and November by the Woman's Missionary Society of The Brethren Church.

Mrs. Dorman Ronk, Editor
1325 Coachman Court
Ashland, Ohio 44805

Subscription price, $7.50 per year in advance.

Send all subscriptions to Mrs. Robert Kroft, 608 Twp. Road 1151, RD 5, Ashland, OH 44805

District Doings

Susan Kidd, Southeastern District President, wrote about their SE conference in September at the Waterbrook Church in Edinburg, Virginia. The beautiful countryside in the mountains prepared the delegates for a joyful day. Susan gave the devotions from Colossians and Deanna Benshoff led the ladies in singing the theme song for this year, "Living for Jesus."

During the business, Susan reviewed the many activities of the societies. What a variety! The goals for the year were discussed, with special emphasis on the monthly missionary emphasis for the entire church and the national project — an offering for the Malaysian endowment fund.

Jim Sluss, the pastor at the Krypton Brethren Church in Kentucky, reported on the renovation and growth in the church and the community. The district offering was received in support of the Krypton Church.

The Ohio Women's Retreat was October 1–2 at Camp Bethany, DeAnn Oburn wrote. God's creation was inspiring and so were the two special speakers. Enid Schrader, from Dayton Hillcrest, showed slides and described her two years in Israel, working as a housemother to disabled Arab children and adults.

Sherry Spenser, a pastor's wife, a mother, and homemaker, used the topic, "He Knows Your Name," based on Psalm 23. She presented Christ as the Good Shepherd who, indeed, knows His sheep by name. And women in the Scriptures were found whom God used in fulfilling His purposes. The Good Shepherd knows us by our names and for our own selves—not in comparison to anyone else. We, too, can be used by Him in the fulfilling of His purposes. In this age of "finding ourselves" and the importance placed on self-esteem, we were encouraged to find our unique identity in Christ—not in our homes, spouse, children, or work. Our self-esteem must be found in Christ and in His love for us, as individuals.

Catherine Lewis sent the report of the fall rally, which was hosted by the Tiosa society in Indiana. Organ and piano duets were played by Norita Kuhn and Dorcas Van Duyne; Carol Scott presided, and Leona Hawk welcomed the 85 ladies present. The speaker was Shirley Junge of Plymouth; she has been blind since she was 9 years old. Shirley explained her life habits and showed games, books printed in Braille, and talking devices which assist her.

The Peru ladies had charge of the memorial service and the Flora ladies received an offering of $540 for ATS.

Susie Stout, the Indiana district president, reported on the rally at Dutchtown. Fran Dickinson, who is with the Rescue Mission in Fort Wayne, was the morning speaker and used the theme "Messiah of Promises."

Special music by a mixed quartet was part of the afternoon's program and a skit, entitled "Memories of Promises," was given by the M.O.P. sisters, a group from Dutchtown. This was about sharing God's promises. The offering totaled $567 for the seminary.

Pat Lusch wrote about the rally at Huntington. Marjorie Teusch gave the welcome, and Phyllis Mayer gave the devotions, based on Hebrews 10:23 and Psalm 25:4. Special music was presented by Sarah Hodson and her daughter, Cindy.

Roxie Stahl was the speaker, wearing her "robe of unbelief" and carrying weights she called the "weights of sin" that keep us from running the race with Christ. As she named many of our hidden sins, she laid each one at the altar. She illustrated her talk with a chalk drawing, depicting a lady, "Faith," overcoming the mountains of sin in her life.

Their attendance was 46 and an offering of $453 was received for ATS.

The Song of the Witness *(from p. 3)*

driver gets out of his car and points his camera, probably at the Amish farmer and his picturesque machinery.

One by one trucks and wagons rumble their way down country lanes to market. Forgotten are the endless days of sowing, cultivating, fighting bugs and weeds, patching harness, or repairing machinery. Today there is joy. Preparation and labor, sowing and cultivating do not go on forever. The joy of harvest will come, and so will the day of harvest of souls.

Two hundred years ago, Johann W. von Goethe wrote:

We must not hope to be mowers,
And to father the ripe gold ears,
Unless we have first been sowers
And watered the furrows with tears.
It is not just as we take it,
This mystical world of ours,
Life's field will yield as we make it
A harvest of thorns or of flowers.

The President's Pen *(cont. from p. 1)*

duce the younger girls to WMS. Is your group doing anything like that? Write me and let me know what different things you are doing to introduce the women of your church to the WMS.

May the New Year bring you many rich blessings.

In Christian love, Shirley Black

The Editor's Ending

Dear Friend,

So much activity is reported in this newsletter! If you are besieged by dismal weather and the post-holiday let down, read the devotions and reports again. Then pray for the societies and names mentioned, pray for the officers of the WMS organization, remember the missionaries, your local church pastor and members, your society's officers and members, your loved ones, and yourself. Then, if you are still depressed, telephone, write, read a book, go for a walk, visit someone. You have many reasons for shaking off the doldrums!

Remember your Christmas wish that the joys of Christmas may continue all year? Don't be the one to break that wish. Furthermore, being happy is good for your health. Helen Steiner Rice wrote, "The most enthusiastic givers in life are the real lovers of life. They experience the soul-joy that comes from responding with the heart rather than the head." Consider that on a peaceful and cloudy day in the spring.

If you need fun things for Valentine's Day, sing these:

"Love, Love, Love" to the tune of "Three Blind Mice"

Love, love, love; love, love, love;
See how it grows, see how it grows.
I love my friends and they love me,
We love others and then, you see,
There's more than enough for a big family —
Love, love, love; love, love, love.

"Here's a Valentine Just for You" ("Frere Jacques" tune)

Here's a valentine, here's a valentine,
Just for you, just for you.
It has hearts and roses,
It has hearts and roses,
Kisses, too; kisses, too.

"Valentines I've Made for You" ("Twinkle, Twinkle" tune)

Valentines I've made for you,
Some with hearts and flowers too.
All of them bring love from me,
Each one's special, you will see.
If you promise to be mine,
I'll give you my valentines.

"Holiday Piggybank Songs" compiled by Jean Warren

Your friend,

Joan

Ashland Theological Seminary:

Building Bridges

By Dr. Frederick J. Finks



LIVING IN ASHLAND, OHIO, affords one the opportunity to have one foot in a rural setting and one foot in a greater metropolitan area like Cleveland or Columbus. On the one hand, our rural setting allows us to view the rich heritage of open farm land, quiet meadows, flowing steams, and an occasional Amish buggy, with its passengers linked to days gone by. On the other hand, Cleveland and Columbus show signs of vitality and growth. New high-rise buildings continue to change the skylines, and creative architecture reveals the innovations of the human mind.

Challenges to be met

To be sure, there are challenges associated with living here. One must be careful not to let the lights of the city blind the eye to the richness of tradition, heritage, and faith. Nor must one hold so tightly to the past that one cannot move forward into the future.



Dr. Fred Finks is President of Ashland Theological Seminary.

There are only a few covered bridges left in Ohio. Most have fallen down or been replaced. Cleveland recently completed a new bridge, years in the building, that links the city to its suburbs. How out of place that bridge would look in rural Ohio. And, likewise, how out of place a covered bridge would look in Cleveland's downtown.

Ashland Theological Seminary is faced with the challenge of preparing Christian leaders to function in all kinds of settings, both rural and metropolitan. But our task really goes beyond that. It incorporates diversities in cultures, races, sexes, denominations, doctrines, and styles of worship, to mention a few.

Seventeen international students from nine countries enrich our community life and challenge our faith. From this interaction our sense of the church is enlarged and our spirits are lifted. We learn of persecution and famine, droughts and earthquakes, poverty and despair; and yet the church grows, and lives are being changed.

Learning from one another

From our brothers and sisters from African, Hispanic, and Asian communities, we learn of struggles for freedom and equality. Yet the richness of worship, praise, and prayer strengthens the spirit, and the church grows.

From the more than sixty denominations represented on our campus we learn of diversity. Yet here, diversity is not something that separates. Instead, it blends us into a community of love and acceptance. What could be a seedbed for turmoil is instead a garden of opportunity.

Styles of worship vary greatly, from quiet, reflective thought, producing an encounter with God, on the one hand, to songs of praise sung with hands held high in unabashed praise to God, on the other. Yet here there are harmony and acceptance. Trust is at the very core of our community.

A desire to bridge gaps

As I think about the ministry of ATS, I view it more and more as building bridges. Absent is the desire to bring about change in order to make all the same. In its place is the desire to bridge the gaps between different communities in order to learn from one another and to enjoy the richness of our differences.

A tradition that has taken root in our Christmas chapel service at the seminary is the singing of *Silent Night* in all the various languages of our students. Tears of joy often stream down the faces of the entire assembly as we realize that this is representative of the church as it should be—all peoples, all languages joined in the harmony of Christ. [⇧]



Building Bridges

Romania

MIHALY TAPOLYAI is a graduate of ATS. At the age of 66, he felt the call of God to return to Romania to train others for Christian ministry. Sensing a need for additional teachers and the need to train others to take his place, Mihaly contacted the seminary and asked for scholarships for two Romanian students.

Anna Maria and Gyongyi (Pearl) arrived from Romania in the fall of 1993. They are enrolled in the pastoral counseling program (there are no Christian counseling programs available in Romania) and plan to return to Romania to train others.



Anna Maria and Gyongyi

Russia

FOR THE LAST 70 years the USSR held to the party line that God does not exist and that Christianity is only for the old and the weak. With the demise of Communism and the dismantling of the Soviet Union, the church in Russia has experienced a resurgence. As the Berlin Wall came down, churches resurfaced and the hunger for God and Christian literature became ravenous.

The faculty of Ashland Theological Seminary began seeking ways in which the seminary might participate in training and equipping leaders for Russia. The first opportunity was an application from a Russian student who desired to attend ATS. Anton Solodukhov enrolled at ATS in the fall of 1992 and has completed his first year of studies. His desire to learn is infectious. Students and faculty alike are drawn to Anton. His goal is to return to Russia and teach and train others for Christian ministry.

To The World



China

NING-HUA WANG arrived in the United States as part of a student exchange program with the Church of the Brethren. She attended some classes at Manchester College, although she already had her undergraduate degree in China. With one year remaining on her visa, Ning-hua expressed interest in some courses in religion on the graduate level. Her sponsor contacted the seminary, and Ning-hua enrolled at ATS in the summer of 1993. She will squeeze her two-year master's degree program into 15 months, and before returning to mainland China will receive her Master of Arts degree.



Ning-hua Wang

Nigeria

MANASSAH and Vicky Wakawa and their children arrived from Nigeria through a sponsor from Korea. Their journey has not been an easy one, but God has remained faithful. This spring both Manassah and Vicky should complete their master's degrees and return to Nigeria. Manassah worked with Mark Teal, a Brethren ATS student from the Oakville, Ind., First Brethren Church, to secure hundreds of Bibles and other Christian literature for training and equipping Nigerian leaders.



Manassah and Vicky Wakawa

India

SONNY SPURGEON heard about Ashland through a friend. He had come to America to receive his undergraduate education at Transylvania Bible College. Having finished his undergraduate work, his desire was to complete his seminary training before returning to India. Sponsor's funding had been fulfilled, and Sonny was unable to move to Ashland. But through a cooperative arrangement between Ashland and Transylvania, Sonny remained in Pennsylvania and commutes to Ashland each week. The drive is long, but Sonny's determination is stronger.

Korea

DOORS have been flung open wide as pastors from Korea have enrolled in the seminary's Doctor of Ministry program. Currently 24 Korean pastors are taking classes, and 45 more are expected to enroll for the fall of 1994. These are leading pastors in Korea who have a strong commitment to evangelism and prayer. The future appears bright for continued growth and outreach. [⇧]



Building Bridges to the Churches

THE MISSION STATEMENT of ATS includes the following commitment: "Ashland Theological Seminary exists to equip committed Christians for leadership in ministries of the pastorate. Ashland Theological Seminary intends its graduates to be servant-leaders in the ministries to which they are called in the Church and in the World."

The church is at the very heart of the curriculum of Ashland Theological Seminary. Theological education has changed dramatically during the past decade. There has been an explosion of specialized courses and programs such as counseling, spiritual formation, missions, education, pastoral care, etc. Yet pastoral ministry and the training of men and women for service within the church continues to be the main emphasis of Ashland Theological Seminary.

A mutual relationship

A strong relationship must exist between the church and the seminary. The church needs to encourage, support, and provide input to the seminary. The seminary, in turn, must provide the kind of leadership the church needs and expects. Neither the church nor the seminary can live in a vacuum. Both are dependent upon one another and provide support for ministry.

Thirty Brethren students currently attend Ashland Seminary. This is one of the largest numbers in recent years. The requested Fair Share support from churches for the seminary is $12.00 per Church Growth Index point.* It is important that every church do its fair share. The future of the church depends on it.

The seminary continues to provide leadership resources to the church by way of seminars, continuing education, committees, and by providing a vision for the future. Together, the church and the seminary are strengthened in their outlook and mission. Together we face the future. [⇧]

*Church Growth Index is the sum of membership, average morning worship attendance, and average Sunday school attendance divided by three.

Kokomo Brethren Church Establishes Scholarship

The First Brethren Church of Kokomo, Indiana, was founded in 1960 under the auspices of the Indiana District Mission Board. The first pastor of the congregation was Rev. Austin Gable.

Early this year, this congregation decided to close its doors to ministry in its community. Yet in one way its ministry will continue. Through a gift to the seminary of $50,000 the Kokomo Church has established "The Kokomo Brethren Church Endowed Scholarship Award."

By the establishment of this scholarship, the Kokomo First Brethren Church will in effect continue its ministry through the training of men and women for Brethren ministry.



Brethren Care Completes Construction Of New Ninety-One Bed Nursing Facility

Ashland, Ohio — For residents of Brethren Care nursing facility in Ashland, Thursday, December 2, was moving day, as they made the short trip up a slight rise to Brethren Care Village, their new home.

Construction of the 91-bed facility began two years ago and was recently completed at a cost of $3.7 million. The 38,000-square-foot facility has the same number of beds as the former building (a state moratorium prevented adding more beds), but it is 11,000 square feet larger. The rooms of the residents are bigger, as are the administrative areas. All work stations have also seen an increase in size, particularly the nursing stations, which had become overcrowded with the additional staff required to continue meeting proper care requirements. The physical therapy, dining, lounge, and activity areas have also been expanded and improved.

The new facility has two L-shaped units that are joined together by an administrative core, in which the administrative offices and support services are located. The building features large windows that provide a lot of natural light. Interior lighting has been softened, since harsh light is often uncomfortable to the aging eye. Floor and wall coverings are soothing and pretty. Rooms of residents are also furnished with new furniture.

Dedication of the new facility and an open house are scheduled for January 16. According to Darrel Barnes, administrator at Brethren Care, this will bring to completion phase one of a three-phase development project at Brethren Care Village.

Phase two calls for the renovation of the old nursing home into 40 assisted-living apartments. These will be for seniors who do not require 24-hour nursing care but who need assistance with some activities of daily life, such as cooking meals, bathing, dressing, or taking medication. It is hoped that work on phase two can begin this spring and be completed in 10 to 12 months.

Phase three will then follow, which is the construction of apartments for independent and retired living.

Brethren Care, Inc., was begun in 1970 at the impetus of the former Benevolent Board of the Brethren Church. The facility has no official affiliation with the Brethren denomination but is overseen by a local board of directors, most or all of whom are Brethren.

Commitment to Stay in Community Results in $100,000 Renovation at Hagerstown Church

Hagerstown, Md. — As 1993 dawned, the Brethren in Hagerstown faced a critical juncture in the life of their church—whether to spend a great deal of money on their present church buildings and stay in the community or to relocate to another place of ministry.

The church considered its options and concluded that God had called it to minister to the inner city community in which it was located. Having made this commitment to stay in the community, the congregation realized that it needed to do a number of things to make its facilities more attractive to others and more useful for ministry.

Experts were consulted and plans for refurbishing the building were drawn. Then followed a summer-long experience of worshiping in the fellowship hall amid dust and aromas of paint and cleanser as work was done on the building.

The sanctuary ceiling and walls were extensively repaired and the room was completely repainted and re-carpeted in an aqua scheme. The pastor's study and the secretary's office were also remodeled, one Sunday school room and a long hall were carpeted, and an awkward and dangerous step was removed.

On the outside of the building, the brickwork was cleaned, pointed, and totally weatherproofed; the trim was painted; and repairs were made to some of the stained glass windows, to the roof, and to the downspouts.

Exterior painting and minor repairs to the parsonage completed the project. Total cost of the renovation work was $100,000, which was fully paid by the time the project was finished.

A dedication service for the remodeled facilities was held October 10, during the church's annual Homecoming celebration.

"We praise God for the resources to do this work," said Hagerstown Pastor Gerald Barr, "and for the attractive and inviting facility we now have for our own worship [services] and study, and for the newcomers we anticipate."

— reported by Pastor Gerald A. Barr

Dinner at Brighton Chapel Aids Midwest Flood Victims

Howe, Ind. — The Brighton Chapel Brethren Church hosted a community chili/soup dinner on Saturday, November 13, to benefit Midwest flood victims.

Gallons of chili and vegetable soup, a "mountain" of corn bread, and scads of salads and homemade desserts were used to feed those who came for the dinner, with plenty of cider to wash it down.

As they ate, they were also entertained. Members of the Brighton congregation played piano solos, put on skits, sang in a men's quartet, and even made music on a mountain dulcimer.

More than $1,800 was received in donations, which was sent to a family in Missouri that is related to some Brighton Chapel members. Pictures sent by this family helped personalize the devastation caused by the flood.

"The church worked hard to make this a good evening for the community," said Brighton Pastor George Youstra. "We thank the Lord for making it possible for this act of Christian love."

— reported by Pastor George T. Youstra

Building Improvements are Dedicated During Thanksgiving Meal at Raystown

Saxton, Pa. — A Thanksgiving meal held Saturday evening, November 13, by the Raystown Brethren Church was also the occasion for a dedication service for various improvements that have been made to the church facility.

The evening's activities got under way with a turkey dinner served by the Raystown Woman's Missionary Society. Approximately 65 people attended the dinner, including several former pastors. During the dinner one table was set aside for a display of photographs of the recent improvements and for scrapbooks of church events. Gifts were given to the oldest person seated at each table and to the Leonard Hopkins family, missionaries in Mexico, for coming the farthest for the event.

Following the meal, the dedication service was held in the church sanctuary. Serving as master of ceremonies for this gathering were Alfred and Bonnie Chamberlain. Alfred is currently pastoring the Raystown Church on a trial basis (his first pastorate), and his wife is president of the Woman's Missionary Society. Former pastors George Hopkins, Rockne Shaal, Don Grace, William Weimert, Robert Norris, and H. Lloy Blattenberger shared remembrances and words of encouragement and rededication.

The members of the W.M.S. presented special music for the dedication service, singing "Let's Just Praise the Lord" and "Friends."

Some of the improvements made to the church facility during the last two years include the following: a well was dug and a pump and storage tanks were installed; a septic system was installed; phone lines and a new electrical entrance box and wiring were installed; the sanctuary was redecorated and the pulpit area remodeled; restrooms were put in the church building; a kitchen sink and cabinets were installed; a parking lot was constructed and paved; several trees and stumps were removed and shrubbery was planted around the church building; the fence around the church property was repaired by the youth group. Most of the work was done on a volunteer basis by the members of the church, with Alfred Chamberlain doing much of the carpentry work, also on a volunteer basis.



Remodeled pulpit area of the Raystown Church building, with new drapes and matching altar railing cloth and kneeling pads.





The Raystown Church building before (l.) and after (r.), showing the new parking lot, shubbery, and other improvements.

The Raystown Brethren express their thanks to those in the Pennsylvania district who helped make these improvements, especially the paving of the parking lot, possible: the Pennsylvania District Mission Board, the Highland, Johnstown III, Masontown, Main Street (Meyersdale), and Mt. Pleasant Brethren Churches, and the Masontown W.M.S.

— reported by Susan Weimert

University Church is Growing On Ashland University Campus

Ashland, Ohio — University Church, the Brethren congregation on the Ashland University campus, recently celebrated its second anniversary by growing out of its original meeting place.

Because the congregation has been steadily growing, the church moved out of the Center for Religious Life in the basement of Memorial Chapel and is now meeting in the upstairs sanctuary. On Parents' Weekend last fall, 198 people attended the Sunday morning service, and worship attendance is now averaging about 180.

Dr. Mike Gleason, Director of Religious Life at the university, said that when the congregation was started, they did not expect to move into the upstairs sanctuary for at least five years.

According to Rev. Ken Cutrer, pastor of the church, about 75 percent of those who attend are university students, and most of the people who attend get involved in the work of the congregation.

Little Crusdader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 19:14).

Hi boys and girls,

Do you have a favorite Bible story? I have many favorites, and I'd like to share one of them with you.

There was once an awful king named Nebuchadnezzar who hated God and wanted everyone in his kingdom to worship a huge statue of gold that he had made. When the people heard the sound of lots of music, they were to fall down and worship this statue.

In that country lived three men named Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego who loved God and who would not fall down and worship the king's statue. When the king heard this, he became very angry and told the three men that he would throw them into a fiery furnace if they would not do as he had commanded.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego told the king, "If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up" (Daniel 3:17-18).

King Nebuchadnezzar was furious and ordered the furnace heated seven times hotter than usual. Then he had the three men who would not worship the gold statue thrown into the fiery furnace. But as the king looked into the furnace, he saw not three men, but four. He immediately had them brought out of the furnace. He discovered that none of their clothes were burnt and not even a hair on their heads was singed.

When King Nebuchadnezzar saw this great miracle, he said that surely the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego was the only true God and that everyone was to start worshiping Him.



Answer the following questions. But watch out! Some of the answers might be tricky.

1. Why do you think King Nebuchadnezzar hated God? Why did he change his mind?

2. Who do you think the fourth person in the furnace was?

3. What is a miracle? Have you every seen a miracle?

4. Do you think more people would believe in God if they believed in miracles?

Ashland Theological Seminary to Host Believers' Church Conference June 1–4

Ashland, Ohio — Ashland Theological Seminary will host a Believers' Church Conference June 1–4 on the theme, "The Lord's Supper: Believers' Church Perspectives."

Myron Augsburger, a well-known Mennonite speaker and writer, will present an address at the opening session of the conference, which will also include special music by a Believers' Church Choir under the direction of ATS professor Ron Sprunger.

Major study papers will be presented by Ben Witherington, ATS professor; Everett Ferguson, outstanding writer on the early-church period; William Estep, a Baptist writer on the Anabaptist movement; Merle Strege, a Church of God (Anderson, Ind.) scholar; Don Durnbaugh, Church of the Brethren historian and editor of *The Brethren Encyclopedia*; Robert Clouse, a Grace Brethren scholar; and Marlin Jeschke, a Mennonite scholar.

Professor Jerry Flora will lead the daily devotions at the conference and other ATS professors will serve as conveners for various sessions and participate in other ways. Seminary President Frederick Finks will conduct the observance of the Threefold Lord's Supper on Friday evening of the conference.

While much of the leadership for the Believers' Church conferences comes from the various Brethren and Mennonite groups, an effort is made to include participation in the conferences by all Believers' churches. This includes Baptists, Methodists, Pentecostals, Disciples, Nazarenes, and other denominations that practice baptism upon profession of faith (as distinct from infant baptism). More than 100 participants are expected at the ATS conference in June.

For more information about the conference or a brochure and registration form, contact Dr. Richard Allison, Ashland Theological Seminary, 910 Center St., Ashland, OH 44805 (phone 419-289-5173; fax 419-289-5969).

Five Deacon Couples Ordained at Nappanee

Nappanee, Ind. — Five couples were ordained to the diaconate during the morning worship service on December 12 at the Nappanee First Brethren Church.

Ordained were Brien and Kathy Hall, Dan and Gail Hertsel, Jim and Benita Shaw, Dale and Deb Sommers, Rod and Maribeth Stump.

Rev. Kerry Scott, president of the Indiana District Ministry of Pastoral and Congregational Care, conducted the ordination service, assisted by Nappanee pastor Rev. Kenneth Hunn.

— reported by Pastor Ken Hunn



New deacon couples at the Nappanee First Brethren Church are (l. to r.) Rod and Meribeth Stump, Dale and Deb Sommers, Dan and Gail Hertsel, Brien and Kathy Hall, and Jim and Benita Shaw.

Deacon, Deaconesses Ordained At Newark Brethren Church

Newark, Ohio — Paul Harsh, Ellen Herron, and Elsie Roberts were ordained deacon and deaconesses during the morning worship service on Sunday, November 21, at the Newark Brethren Church.

Rev. James F. Black, pastor of The Brethren Church in New Lebanon, Ohio, and a member of the Ohio District Board of Oversight, conducted the ordination service. Rev. Black showed hats of a fireman, policeman, football player, and cowboy to symbolize their professions. Then he placed a wash basin and towel on the floor in front of the altar to symbolize the servant ministry of Christ and that of deacons and deaconesses.

Assisting Rev. Black during the laying on of hands for the new deacon and deaconesses were Rev. Stephen Cole, pastor of the Newark Church, and Rev. Jerald Radcliff. Following the laying on of hands, Paul Harsh, choking back tears, sang "Now I Belong to Jesus."



Posing following the ordination service are (front row, l. to r) Ellen Herron, Elsie Roberts, Paul Harsh, Grace Radcliff, (back row, l. to r.) Rev. Stephen Cole, Rev James F. Black, and Rev. Jerald Radcliff.

In addition to the three ordained on this occasion, Rev. Radcliff, a retired Brethren pastor, and his wife Grace were also recently added to the Deacon Board of the Newark Church. These five join Mable Wilkins, who served as the lone deaconess for a number of years.

— reported by Pastor Stephen Cole

Midwest District Men of Mission Meet for Inspiration, Fellowship

Falls City, Nebr. — The Midwest District Brethren Men of Mission met November 5–6 at the Falls City First Brethren Church.

Bob Wheeler of Auburn, Nebr., gave an inspiring message on Friday evening, challenging the Men of Mission to reach out and spread the gospel. On Saturday morning, guest speaker Paul Weinert urged the men to be called men of God serving their communities.

The men of the Falls City First Brethren Church hosted the gathering.

— reported by John Rieger, district chairman

From The Grape Vine



The **Brethren Men of Mission of the Falls City, Nebr., First Brethren Church** held a public service on Sunday evening, November 21, with 30 in attendance. Falls City Pastor Bill Shipman showed slides from the four years he and his wife served on a mission field in Guyana, South America. An offering was taken for the BMOM national project. On September 8 the Men of Mission began Wednesday evening cottage prayer meetings. Eleven men and women attended the first meeting, and attendance is now up to 18. According to reporter John Rieger, the Falls City First Brethren Church is growing in numbers and fellowship, and the Brethren there enjoy hearing God's word together.

Members of the **Newark, Ohio, Brethren Church** held a celebration on August 15 to mark the 30th anniversary of their present church building. Rev. and Mrs. Stephen Cole and daughter Jennifer were also honored on the occasion for having completed ten years as the pastoral family. Rev. Jerald Radcliff stood in for Rev. Cole in the pulpit that morning, and Rev. Radcliff's wife Grace gave an oral history of the Newark building and displayed a large collection of photographs, letters, contracts, bulletins, and other memorabilia of the congregation. A special offering for the church's building fund was taken, and the $566 that was received enabled the church to reach its goal for that date of $25,000 in the fund.

Rickey Bolden, former offensive lineman for the Cleveland Browns football team and now pastor of the Washington, D.C., Brethren Church, was the guest speaker December 5 during the morning worship service at the Vinco Brethren Church (Mineral Point, Pa.). Pastor Bolden was accompanied by his wife Glenda and their two young sons. A continental breakfast was served prior to the morning services by the Senior BYIC, and a carry-in dinner was held following the worship service.

The **original Ashland College charter**, dating back to 1878, was recently presented to Ashland University by the great-grandchildren of one of the institution's founders. The document, dated February 20, 1878, was discovered in an old desk passed down through the generations by members of the Austin Moherman family. Moherman was one of seven Ashland area residents who urged the Brethren Church to locate its proposed college in Ashland during the mid-1870s. The charter and bylaws document was kept in Moherman's possession after the charter was granted, and was passed down to his son and ultimately to his great-grandson. Though legally not a valid document anymore, it has historical value to the university and has been placed in the AU archives.

Dr. Gretchen Berggren, Maternal and Child Specialist for World Relief of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), has been selected by UNICEF as one of six "children's health champions." In a ceremony at the White House on December 21, Dr. Berggren received an award from President Clinton honoring her work on community-based nutrition and primary health care programs, and her lifelong contribution to improving the health of children in Haiti. Upon receiving the award, Dr. Berggren stated, "At this Christmas season, there are many children who are homeless, unfed and unclothed. It is a privilege to work for an organization like World Relief whose calling is to reach these little ones as Jesus commanded us to do." Most of the money that is given in The Brethren Church for relief work is channeled to areas of need through World Relief of NAE.

Religious Freedom Under Attack

Freedom of religion often seems to be under attack from every quarter in our country. Recently the Brevard Housing Authority told a group of senior citizens living in a federally-owned building in Titusville, Fla., that they were not allowed to form a Bible club in the building because the executive director of the Housing Authority had introduced a policy that did not allow Bible studies or church services to be held on Housing Authority property.

When Melanie Davis Stockwell, coordinator of the Southeast Regional Office of The Rutherford Institute (a nonprofit civil liberties organization specializing in the defense of religious liberty), was informed of this, she wrote a letter to Ed Chavers, executive director of the Brevard Housing Authority. She explained that since senior citizens were allowed to meet together in the building for other group activities, the Housing Authority could not prohibit the Bible club from meeting. Consequently, in early December Chavers informed the seniors that they *could* hold Bible club meetings in the building.

"This case shows the fear and ignorance of many of our public officials," Ms. Stockwell said. "Common sense should have told them that senior citizens should be able to talk about what they want in the building in which they live."

The average American man, according to *Men's Health* magazine, watches 26 hours and 44 minutes of television a week. No wonder so many Christians don't have time for daily devotions!

In Memory

Rosalie Miller, 84, December 10. Member in recent years of The Brethren Church in New Lebanon. Services by Pastors Jim Black and Ray Hesketh. Mrs. Miller was the wife of Brethren Elder Percy C. Miller, who survives her. Together they served the Brush Valley, Pleasant View, Berlin, Hillcrest, Gratis, and West Alexandria Brethren churches. They were the parents of two sons, Clair and Earl, both of whom live in the Dayton, Ohio, area.

Holmes G. Conaway, 81, December 9. Member of the Masontown Brethren Church, where he had served as a trustee and church treasurer and was a deacon at the time of his death. Services by Pastor Curt Nies and Phillip Maronde.

Albert Dillow, 75, December 4. Member of the Masontown Brethren Church and the Builders Sunday school class, which he had served as teacher; he had also served as a church trustee. Services by Pastor Curt Nies.

Roger H. Sheeley, 75, November 29. Member since 1929 of the St. James Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Brian H. Moore

David Prucnal, 9, November 26. Member of the Pleasant View Brethren Church. Services by Pastor R. Keith Hensley.

Adeline E. Miller, 89, November 25. Member for 65 years of the Goshen First Brethren Church, where she had served as church secretary and was a longtime member of the Woman's Missionary Society, serving as Indiana District W.M.S. president from 1961 to 1971. Services by Pastor Donald Rowser.

Dwight Bruner, November 14. Member of the Pleasant View Brethren Church, where he was a faithful Sunday school attender and a member of the Men of Mission. Services by Pastor R. Keith Hensley.

Goldenaires

Wilbur and Helen Gorsuch, 65th, December 1. Members of the Goshen First Brethren Church.

Membership Growth

Oak Hill: 3 by baptism

New Lebanon: 10 by baptism

Warsaw: 2 by baptism, 2 by transfer

St. James: 4 by baptism, 1 by affirmation of faith

Fairless Hills-Levittown: 2 by bapt., 1 by trans.

Announcing:

A Brethren-Sponsored, Short-Term Missions Opportunity

Three weeks of service at the Youth With A Mission (YWAM) Center in Juarez, Mexico, preceded by a weekend of training in Ashland.

Term of service: Mid-June to early July

Team size: Two staff members and eight youth—a total of ten.

For: Christian young people who have completed their sophomore year in high school through those age 20.

Funding: Each team member will be required to raise his or her own funds (estimated amount, $500).



South of the Border

Ministry opportunities:

- Work projects
- Ministry with children
- Puppets
- Street evangelism
- Worship services

Be ready to have your faith challenged! This opportunity provides experience for those who have made a commitment to Christ and who have a passion for or are exploring missions.

For more information, contact:

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THE BRETHREN
Evangelist
FEBRUARY 1994



Left, a view of Mexico City from the roof of the house of Brethren missionaries Tim and Jan Eagle.



Right, new officers of the National Convention of The Brethren Church in Mexico, with this year's theme banner, "Witnesses to the World."



Left, the Cathedral in the historic center of Mexico City, one of the largest church buildings in the world.

Memories of Mexico City

See pages 4–7.

Love as a Command

By Richard C. Winfield, Editor

NO SOONER did the Christmas decorations come down in the malls than the St. Valentine's Day decorations went up. And suddenly we were seeing red. The time had come once again to celebrate romance.

Ah, romance, falling in love, those exciting feelings! How wonderful they can be! But the trouble with romance, with falling in love, is that if we can fall into it, we can also fall out of it. And if the divorce statistics are any indication, that seems to be happening a lot.

Marriage is not a bed of roses. It requires commitment, persistence, patience, sacrifice, tough love. Romantic feelings just don't cut it. They can be the whipped cream on a marriage, but they can't be the substance of the relationship.

What about love in the church? How is it faring? Jesus said, "By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35). From the number of people-problems we have in our churches, it would seem that something's lacking here as well.

Contaminated thinking

Could it be that the reason we do not have a greater degree of love in the church is that the romantic idea of "falling in love" has contaminated our thinking about Christian love? We read in the Bible that we are to love fellow Christians, our neighbors, even our enemies, and we believe that somehow this is just going to happen. We expect some kind of warm, benevolent feeling just to come over us. And when it doesn't, we excuse ourselves from responsibility because we believe love is something that can't be forced.

But this command, like any other command, must be obeyed. So we are faced with the question, How can we make ourselves love other people, some of whom we may not even like?

A commitment of the will

First of all, it takes a commitment of the will. We have to commit ourselves to love others; we must tell God and ourselves that we are going to do it.

Why should we do this? Well, if we are serious about the lordship of Christ in our lives and are seeking to follow Him, then we have little choice in the matter. Making a commitment of the will is what takes love out of the "falling into" realm and puts it into the realm of obedience.

Second, if we are going to start loving others, we have to work at it. We have to act it out. In fact, the actions may have to precede the love.

In Luke 6:27 Jesus told His followers to love their enemies and then went on to tell them to "do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you." Sometimes we have to reverse this order. We have to start praying for others and blessing them and doing good to them before we can ever really love them. But when we do these things with a sincere and obedient heart (not hypocritically, which is sometimes the case), love will follow.

As I thought about this, I remembered a true account I once read in an article by Rev. George Solomon. It was about John G, an alcoholic who had deserted his wife and two children and ended up on skid row. He escaped from that life, but after being sober a year, he decided to divorce his wife, who had stayed with him despite his drinking.

A rescue-mission worker argued with John, claiming that he owed his wife as many years sober as she had given him when he was drinking. John finally agreed to stay with her, but planned that later he would get the divorce.

John started doing things for his wife. As he did so, their relationship changed. In time, he didn't "owe" her any more sober years. But he no longer wanted the divorce. "I'm just happy to be with her," he said. "I'm beginning to find out that love is thinking about another person before you think of yourself."

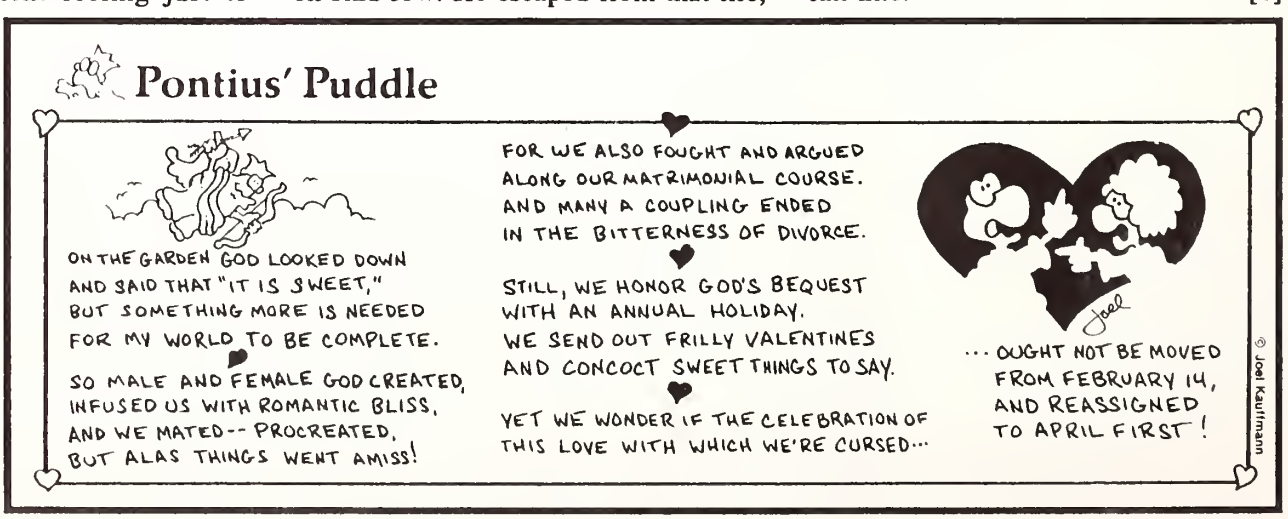
Yes, the experience of love often follows acts of love. This is true not only in marriage, but also in relationships with other Christians, neighbors, even enemies.

God's power

Even so, to love others as Christ has commanded us, we need something else: we need God's power. Therefore, we need to pray for God to empower us to love. We can't do it alone. Paul said, ". . . it is *God* who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose" (Phil. 2:13, *italics added*). (And what higher "purpose" is there than to love?)

But we can't expect God to empower us to love if we won't make a commitment of the will. He's not going to make the decision for us. Nor can we expect God to continue giving us the power to love if we don't use it. Paul said that it is *God* who works in us, but right before that he also said that *we* are to work (Phil. 2:12).

Jesus commanded us to love others, and God will empower us to do so. But we have to make the commitment; and we have to put forth the effort. This is one kind of love we can't expect just to fall into. [⇧]



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Cover: Photographs taken by members of the Rev. David Cooksey family on their November 1993 trip to Mexico City. See pages 4–7 for reflections on this trip.

Answers to the Little Crusader page:

1. neighbor
2. strength
3. Father
4. heart.

Message: Believe in Jesus Christ and love one another.

Memories of Mexico City

By Carolyn Cooksey

With accompanying articles by Emily and David Cooksey

Last fall, Rev. David Cooksey, Director of Pastoral Ministries for The Brethren Church, was one of the speakers at the National Convention of The Brethren Church in Mexico, held Saturday, November 20, in Mexico City. Traveling with Rev. Cooksey on this trip to Mexico were his wife Carolyn and their daughter Emily. On this and the following pages are reminiscences by the Cookseys, beginning with Carolyn, of the several days (November 17–22) they spent in Mexico City on that occasion.

PRIOR TO LAST NOVEMBER, I was a typical naive North American about Mexico. I had vague conceptions of Mexico's historical connections with the Aztec Indians, Montezuma, and the Spanish conquests. I remembered the Alamo and the Mexican war. And I thought I knew a little about our neighbors to the south.

Armed with my misconceptions, I eagerly looked forward to our trip to Mexico City as a pleasant break from the cold, wet weather of north-central Ohio. I had hopes of enjoying a somewhat relaxing few days with our friends, Brethren missionaries Tim and Jan Eagle and Todd and Tracy Ruggles, and of observing, absorbing, and reflecting on another culture.

First impressions

Our first impression of Mexico City, gained from the air as we approached the city, was of its size. It is a huge, sprawling city, bounded by mountains on three sides, with the city spreading across the valley floor in all directions. Later, in the airport, as we passed through immigration we were greeted by the familiar faces of Juan Carlos and María Miranda, and we could see Eagles and Ruggles holding welcome signs on the other side of customs. After greetings, we joined the crowds of people and went outside into the warm sunshine and a world of new sights and sounds.

Some of us took a taxi, the rest went by foot-subway-buses across town to the part of the city that was to be our home for the next few days. I was not prepared for anything! People were everywhere—all ages, beautiful skin, thick black hair, warm brown eyes! There were also hundreds of buses and seemingly thousands of VW "Bugs."

The air was thick with exhaust (even though Tim assured us that it was a clear day). Everything (billboards, street signs, etc.) was written in Spanish, which I was not comprehending; and the comments of our taxi driver were spoken much quicker than anything I had ever heard in my three years of college Spanish. This initial ride was somewhat unnerving. But there was so much going on that we were more amazed than terrified.

The Eagles' home is a simply beautiful, sparsely furnished, economically designed, two-story cement structure located at the top of a crowded street. It has an outside spiral staircase that leads to a rooftop with a magnificent view (on a clear day) of the distant mountains. A water tank on the roof assures a reliable water supply, just as the candles in every room of the house assure reliable light during the frequent electrical outages. Jan's artistic talent was in evidence inside and outside the house. We immediately felt at home in these hospitable surroundings.

After a tour of the house, we ventured outside for a walk through the neighborhood. We went past a



The home of Tim and Jan Eagle, with Emily Cooksey standing by the door. Note the sunshade on top of the house and the railing around the flat roof, which is reached by a spiral staircase at the side of the house.

Mrs. Cooksey works as a reference librarian at the Ashland University library.

small park and onto a narrow, crowded walkway that was just inches from an equally crowded and narrow street. It was as if we had stepped into another time period. Women carried babies on their backs; a man carried a falcon; dogs ran loose. We turned a corner and saw a donkey hitched to a load. There were traffic sounds, music, vendor stalls, and hole-in-the-wall shops selling unusual things. We entered an open-air market where we saw vegetables and spices we did not recognize and were offered exotic fruits to taste.

Jan picked out fruit and bargained for fresh vegetables and meat. Since there are no set prices, this took some time. We found it fascinating, but it could be frustrating on a regular basis. The money she used to pay for these purchases proved to be an enigma to us—there are so many zeros on everything, with thousands of pesos equaling almost nothing.

Having completed our marketing, we headed home for the time-consuming process of food preparation—scrubbing, soaking in iodine water, boiling, peeling, frying, and refrying. But when it was finished and we had our first taste of this authentic Mexican food, we found it to be delicious.

I began day two by discovering the joy of rooftop living. What a thrill to feel the warmth of the rising sun and to drink morning coffee to the sound of the rooster's crowing! By this time we were all pretty much aware that we were in a Third-World country with a lower standard of living than ours in the U.S. Most of the "rules of survival" were in place by then, among them:

- don't drink the water, especially while showering or brushing your teeth
- do drink what has been boiled, bottled, or canned
- don't eat unrecognizable stuff unless you know who made it
- keep eyes closed, arms inside windows, and pray a lot when in a private car
- keep eyes open, hold onto something, and pray a lot in public transportation
- be prepared for anything, open to the unusual, and enjoy the newness.

Sightseeing

Thursday was a free day for sightseeing. After consulting numerous maps and guidebooks, we ventured out to navigate what appeared, even to the casual observer, to be a very complex street system. Todd has mastered the art of being a skilled defensive/aggressive driver, and in our three-hour, cross-city ride we learned a few more rules of the road, namely: traffic signals actually mean very little and are largely ignored; never ask for directions, since the average person on the street doesn't know the road system any better than you do but will tell you anything to save face.

Although we were never actually lost, much of the time we didn't know where we were, and when we finally got to our destination we didn't know how we had gotten there. We did enjoy the ancient archaeological ruins of Teotihuacan and the pyramids of the moon and the sun. And it took us less than an hour to return home!

On Friday we used the public transportation system. We spent

Our Trip to Mexico

By Emily Cooksey

WHILE VISITING Mexico City, I went with my parents and the Eagles and the Ruggles to the street markets. They have markets everywhere in Mexico City. We saw many different kinds of fruits. People stand on the streets selling food, flowers, and house supplies. They also sell things that they make.

People are very friendly in Mexico. Food is not very expensive, and transportation doesn't cost much either

We went to see the Teotihuacan Pyramids. There are two of them, a sun pyramid and a moon pyramid. The sun pyramid had 250 steps to the top.

The Eagles and Ruggles have to boil all of their water so that they won't get sick. There are also dogs that run loose around the neighborhoods.

The church that Eagles and Ruggles are working with meets in one room in a small brick building. They have picnics on the roof of the building. [⇧]

Emily is in the eighth grade at the Ashland, Ohio, Middle School.



Carolyn Cooksey, Tracy Ruggles, Tim Eagle, Emily Cooksey, Jan Eagle, and Dave Cooksey stand at the base of the pyramid to the sun before climbing the 250 steps to its top.

the day in the historic center (Zocalo) of the city exploring the markets and buildings. Of special interest to us was the Cathedral, one of the largest church buildings in the world, dating back to the 1500s. The walls, inside and out, were enclosed in scaffolding. The structure was very dark inside. There were numerous altars where people bowed before statues of the suffering, crucified Christ. (There was but one statue of the risen, glorious Christ, which seemed almost out of place.) There were beautiful golden walls, priceless woven tapestries, and magnificent paintings. Yet the building itself is sinking into the ground.

I could not help but wonder if this great building was a symbol of institutionalized religion at its worst—people worshiping a dead Christ, surrounded by the work of their own hands and imaginations held up by manmade scaffolding. Yet there were certainly devout Christians there as well—the flames of numerous candles providing images of the Light shining in the darkness, bringing hope and life to all who believe.

Saturday was Convention day for The Brethren Church in Mexico. After a very uplifting but exhausting Convention, it was good to relax at the Ruggles' home in the company of Juan and María and to discuss the work there, The Brethren Church, and future dreams.

Sunday we attended one of the Mexican Brethren churches, where we noticed how different the building, the service, and the surrounding community are from many churches we've visited in the U.S. But the hearts and minds of the believers are much the same. Following the service, Jan, Tracy, Emily, and I took public transportation to María's room, where we

Gaining a New Perspective on Missions

By David Cooksey

WHAT a wonderful opportunity I was afforded this past fall when I was asked to speak at the National Convention of The Brethren Church in Mexico, held in Mexico City on November 20!

As I looked forward to this experience, however, several concerns went through my mind, especially the language difference and my own uncertainty about whether I could speak for a couple of hours instead of twenty minutes. My topics were Brethren polity, history, and doctrine, which posed no problem. But the last hour was for questions and answers, and that was scary.

The presentations went well, however. The Brethren in Mexico are loving and gracious people. They made my visit a joy and a memory that will remain with me forever.

Shortly after our arrival in Mexico City, we began to get a real look at how life is lived there. The homes of the Ruggles and the Eagles were both very simple but nice. Things we take for granted here in the U.S. are less dependable there. Their kitchens are small and so are their appliances—only a small refrigerator and stove. Electricity was undependable at best, with a single light bulb hanging from the ceiling of each room. These would dim frequently, especially when the one-room electric heater would come on in the cool evenings. The houses have no central heat.

City water is undependable, so whenever it is on, water is stored in rooftop tanks so that it will be available throughout the day. Other utility services are brought to homes sometime during the week and are purchased as needed. A person comes down the street ringing a bell or blowing a whistle announcing that either the trash pickup or the bottled gas man will be along shortly. Then you take your trash to the truck or pay cash for the gas bottle at curb side. Using bathroom facilities is different also, but I won't go into that. They do, however, have a wonderful shower with plenty of hot water.

During our visit, Todd took us to Jesus del Monte, the community where he and Ramone, a young man of Indian descent, lead a Bible study. Ramone is a very warm and friendly person with a deep commitment to Christian ministry. The community is not far from where Todd lives, but it took about 30 minutes to get there because of the poor dirt road and the traffic. I'm not certain that we couldn't have walked there in 30 minutes.

About half way between these two communities I saw two extremes of human existence. First was a dump, where people live in tin and cardboard shacks and glean their livelihood from what is brought to the dump. During the week, Jan and Tracy minister to the people who live in this area.

At the other extreme was a



Dave, Carolyn, and Emily Cooksey with the banner welcoming those who attended the 5th National Convention of The Brethren Church in Mexico.

shared our lives and stories and prayed for one another in our ministries to women.

In Mexico, many of the people live poverty-filled lives with limited opportunity for education and little economic security. For women it is an extremely hard existence. They must do much of the household work by hand, without time- and energy-saving appliances. Health care is limited and of poor quality. And the macho attitude of the society definitely relegates women to a second-class position.

I am thrilled for the ministry of María Miranda. Her daily radio broadcasts on more than 600 stations is the only international program of its kind. It is designed to reach women in very practical ways.

It was good to see the Eagles and the Ruggles learning to talk and think in Spanish and to cook and drive like Mexicans. As we talked together about their work with the four congregations they serve, they shared their struggle with the Christo-pagan belief system of that culture. Shrines to Mary and religious holidays play an important part in the daily lives of so many of the people, and yet it seems that true religion (Christianity), like the traffic laws, is either loosely followed or completely ignored.

The work in Mexico has had a strong beginning. Tim and Jan, Todd and Tracy are dedicated to its continuation and growth. The Mexican people are a gentle people with centuries of tradition but with a great need for the life-saving Word. My naive suppositions about the country gave way to the reality and truth of the need for Christian evangelism and outreach. I urge each of you to continue praying for the Mexican people, for the work of The Brethren Church there, and for these special missionaries. [⇧]

country club and golf course surrounded by large, expensive homes rivaling many I have seen in the U.S. This nice area was almost in view from the dump.

The National Convention of The Brethren Church in Mexico was held at the Palo Solo Church, which is pastored by Moses Calderon. Pastor Jose Castro and the congregation he serves came across town to be a part of the Convention. What a really great experience it was for me to begin putting faces and voices with names I had previously known only from reading them in the missionary news! I also met the wives and children of these pastors. It was a great day of meeting brothers and sisters in Christ who are ministering in another part of the world.

Convention highlights

The Convention started a little differently from our General Conference. Time is not of the utmost importance in Mexico. On the morning of the Convention, someone was to pick me up at eight o'clock. The person did not come until nine, and when we got to the church, everyone was just standing around talking, while some were still arriving.

About 9:30 we began singing, and an hour later, as people continued to come (most by bus or on foot), the morning speaker was introduced. He was the pastor of the largest Methodist church in Mexico City. He was very evangelistic—like a Mexican Bud Hamel—and hardly took a deep breath as he spoke for an hour.

When he finished, everyone got up and went out into the street in front of the church. It was Revolution Day in Mexico, similar to our 4th of July in the U.S. The Mexican people are very patriotic, and a solemn service of respect for flag and country took place there in the street. Some of the teen-age girls of the church marched and sang, and the flag was placed on a pole and slowly raised as we all stood at attention, hands over our hearts, and sang the Mexican national anthem. Many of the people had tears in their eyes as we sang. In many ways the attitudes of the Mexican people remind me of the way things were in the U.S. in the 50's and 60's—more respect for people and property, with young people polite and content to be quiet during meetings.*

Lunch for the Convention was a carry-in meal. Brethren are the same the world over—good food and lots of it. We ate on the roof of the church in the warm sunlight, with fellowship and laughter in abundance. Following lunch, the Convention continued with reports, elections, my presentation, more singing, and business until after dark.

The next day (Sunday), the worship service followed the same kind of loose timetable as the Convention. It was not over until late afternoon. Juan Carlos and María were a great help as interpreters and guides, as were also the Ruggles and the Eagles.

Special memories

Several things really stand out in my memories of my visit to Mexico City in addition to those I've already mentioned. The people in Mexico City are very open to the gospel, and without hesitation Todd and Tim talked to people on the streets about the Lord. The people in the churches are excited about their faith and are involved in outreach. The two neighborhood ministries that have been started are growing because they emphasize Bible study and outreach. The people are basically warm, kind, and industrious, with simple worldly needs but great spiritual needs.

Perhaps you will someday have the opportunity to make a working trip to our Mexican mission field. It definitely helped me to put things in a different perspective, and especially gave me a greater love for those who are called to share the words of truth in a different culture and another language. I will never read a report about Mexico again without visual images and fond memories of new-found friends. [⇧]

*The young people told me about their schools, which are quite different from ours today in the U.S. They have no behavioral problems to speak of, and if a student gets into trouble at school, it is worse at home. In order to advance from elementary school to middle school and from middle school to high school, three things are required—a certificate of academic achievement, a certificate of attendance, and a certificate of good behavior.



Plant Your Roots Deeply Into the Local Church

By Luis Palau

WHEN IT COMES to fast food, my wife Pat and I are of two completely different minds. She likes Burger King; I definitely prefer McDonalds. But that's okay. In such matters, variety is the spice of life.

Unfortunately, many Americans treat going to church much the same way they decide where to go to eat. "Let's see, we went to Dairy Queen last week, so let's go to Wendys this week." And off they go, fluttering like butterflies from one church to another.

Dangers of shallowness

I'm convinced it's crucial that we plant our roots deeply into a local church. Otherwise, if you and I remain shallow in this important area of commitment, we'll lose out on the support of other Christians when the storms of life hit.

By neglecting to minister within a home church, we also cause other Christians to lose something. The Lord Jesus says that He is the vine and that we are connected to Him as branches. As a result, through Jesus, we are connected to each other. We are members of His body, the church.

In 1 Corinthians 12:26 we read, "If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it." How you and I relate to the Body of Christ directly affects other Christians. We need each other!

If we remain shallow in this important area of commitment, we'll lose out on the support of other Christians when the storms of life hit.

My wife and I are active members of a church near our home in Portland, Oregon. Even though we travel quite a lot to speak at Christian conferences and evangelistic crusades around the world, we know we're not excused from taking an active part in the life and ministry of our home church.

Sure, we've heard about bigger and (possibly) better churches scattered here and there throughout the city. But so what? The only valid reasons I can think of for leaving one's local church to go to another church would be heresy about a pivotal doctrine such as the divinity of Jesus Christ or the authority of Scripture; blatant immorality (whether theft, adultery, or whatever) left undisciplined and unresolved; spiritual deadness that threatens the spiritual vitality of oneself or one's family; or of course making a move to another city.

Speak well of the church

Since when is the church a country club where you pay your dues until you find somewhere else more exciting to go? Even though our home church (like all churches!) has its faults, we've gladly spoken well of it and especially made a point to do so in front of our sons. We found that this helped them to claim the church as their own when they got older.

One habit we have when getting ready to leave the house on Sunday mornings is to take certain expectations about what we want to get out of church that morning and leave them at home with the dog. Consequently, everything we receive is a blessing. Our goal isn't to get, but to give.

Volunteer to serve

Whatever we do for the least of God's family, we actually do for Him. Don't wait until someone asks you to do something. Volunteer to serve in some capacity. Take the initiative to invite someone to join you for Sunday dinner. Show hospitality to your church's missionaries when they are home on furlough. Visit the sick and the elderly. Take food to those facing financial difficulties.

Several years ago, a friend lost his job. Some months later, we heard that his family's house would be taken away if the payments were not met. The family already had sold its cars in order to meet its financial obligations. Pat suggested that we make one of their house payments. We invited others to help as well.

Together, as part of God's family, we can support each other in even the most difficult of times, if our roots are planted deeply into the local church. [⇧]

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Dr. Palau is a global evangelist who has spoken to more than 10 million people in 60 countries. He also is the author of more than three dozen books and booklets, including What Is a Real Christian?, *which has been published in 30 languages worldwide.*



Understanding the Bible

Principles of Biblical Interpretation

By Brenda B. Colijn

ANYONE who has spent much time studying the Bible has sometimes been puzzled about how to interpret it. We can sympathize with Peter's comment about Paul's letters:

> Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.
>
> *2 Peter 3:15-16**

Peter's comment points out the Bible's dual nature. Paul writes his letters in his own way, using the wisdom God has given him, but what he writes is Scripture. Thus the Bible, like Christ, is both human and divine—a production of recognizable human beings which nevertheless bears the inspiration and authority of God. Because it has God's authority, we ignore or distort it at our peril.

The eternal in the historical

We must take the Bible's dual nature into account in order to understand it fully. This does not mean that we separate the divine parts from the human parts in order to obey the former and ignore the latter. It means that the eternal is revealed in the historical throughout Scripture just as it was in the incarnation.

Because God chose to give us His written word in particular historical contexts (some very different from our own), we cannot just consider what the Bible means to us. (In our individualistic culture, this is often expressed as "what this verse means to me.") We would do well to remember Paul's criticism of the Corinthians: "Did the word of God originate with you? Or are you the only people it has reached?" (1 Cor. 14:36).

When we read the Bible, we must discern in what way it is God's particular word to particular people at a certain point in history. We must also discern in what way it is God's eternal word to all times and places, including our own. To fully understand a biblical passage, therefore, we must ask three questions: What did it mean in its original historical context? What does it mean in our time and place? What must we do in response to it? Let's look at each of these questions in more detail.

What did the passage mean in its original setting?

We must first ask what the passage meant in its original setting. Our goal is to understand the meaning that the writers, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, intended to communicate. In order to understand this meaning, we must study the text under the guidance of that same Holy Spirit. According to Alexander Mack, "when a believing person whose inner ears are opened reads the Holy Scriptures outwardly, he will hear as the Lord Jesus intends His teaching to be understood. He hears that which the apostles want to express in their writings." In interpreting the Bible, study and prayer go hand in hand.

Brethren have always believed in finding out as much as possible about the historical setting of the Bible. The early Brethren read histories to learn about the beliefs and practices of the early church. They wanted to experience the life of the apostolic church in their own communities. Their research illuminated the Scriptures for them and helped lead them to their distinctive practices, such as trine immersion baptism, threefold Communion, and anointing. When an insight from someone who knew Greek called into question the order in which they observed the three parts of the Lord's Supper, they changed their practice accordingly.

A passage and its contexts

To understand a passage in its original setting, we must study both the passage itself and its contexts. We should read the passage many times using several different translations. Disagreements among the translations will alert us to possible difficulties in interpretation. We should ask ourselves what kind of writing it is—a story, a letter, a poem, a prophecy, and so on. This will help us to know what to expect of the passage. For example, poems often use more figurative language than letters do.

As we read through the passage, we should notice the structure, the grammar, and the important words. As with any writing, we assume that the words are meant literally unless they are used in an unusual and striking way. We can find out more about the words by looking up other instances of them in a concordance. Books are also available that discuss in depth the meaning of biblical words.

To understand the contexts of the passage, we use the Bible itself as well as other resources. Most problems in biblical interpretation come about because of ignoring one or more of these contexts.

A biblical passage has several contexts. Most importantly, we must place a passage in the context of the material that comes before and after it and in the context of the whole book in which it appears. Then we should compare it with passages in other books by the same author. Finally, we should consider how it fits in the rest of the Old or New Testament, as well as in the Bible as a whole.

To fill in the historical and cultural contexts, we should try to find out who

*Quotations from the Bible are from the *New International Version.*

Dr. Colijn is a member of the Smoky Row Brethren Church in Worthington, Ohio. She chairs The Brethren Church's Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication, which is preparing this series of articles.

"When we read the Bible, we must discern in what way it is God's particular word to particular people at a certain point in history. We must also discern in what way it is God's eternal word to all times and places, including our own."

wrote the passage, to whom, and for what purpose. We should also find out about any historical fact or cultural practice mentioned in the passage. Resources such as Bible handbooks, Bible dictionaries and encyclopedias, and Bible atlases can give us this information.

What does the passage mean in our time and place?

Once we have a sense of what the passage meant in its original setting, we can ask what it means in our time and place. The early Brethren were historically naive; they did not see the differences between the first century culture and their own. They simply read the New Testament as if it were contemporary with them. In our day, many people read the Bible with the opposite assumption—that the Bible is an ancient book whose original message has no relevance today.

We can't read the Bible as naively as the early Brethren did, because we know how different our culture is from the cultures of the Bible writers. But we must have the same conviction they had that the Bible's message has relevance today. Because the Bible is both historical and eternal, its meaning today will be based on its meaning in its original setting.

Bringing a biblical passage into our time and place requires distinguishing between universal principles and particular applications. The Bible contains both. For example, Paul lays out the universal principle that we should not create stumbling blocks for our brothers and sisters in the faith (Rom. 14; 1 Cor. 8, 10). He applies this principle to the particular historical situation of meat sacrificed to idols.

To determine what a passage means to us, we identify the universal principle and apply it in a form that makes the same point in our culture. The better we understand the original context, the more clearly we will see how a passage should be applied today. For example, God's character and purposes are eternal; the plan of salvation is the same today as it always was. Similarly, human nature has not changed since the first century, so the Bible's moral instruction is as directly relevant today as it was then. By contrast, we no longer live in an agricultural society that permits us to care for the poor by letting them glean the edges of our fields. But we must still apply the principle of compassion for the poor in all the ways available in our society.

What must we do in response?

The third question we must ask is what we must do in response to a passage. Modern Christians often regard personal obedience as a final (sometimes optional) step when studying the Bible. After we understand a passage, we then decide how (or whether) to apply it to our lives. In our Sunday school classes or Bible studies, we deal with personal application at the end—unless we run out of time. And since we regard application as so personal and individual, we don't hold people accountable for it. Many modern textbooks on interpreting the Bible leave out application altogether.

The attitude of the early Brethren was very different. Anyone who reads their writings is struck by their constant and distinctive emphasis on obedience. They went to the Bible precisely to look for new examples to follow and new commands to obey. They thought of themselves as disciples of Christ. It was natural for them to go to Scripture to sit at the feet of their Teacher and Lord to learn how to follow Him more closely and love Him more fully. Mack declared that anyone who reads the Bible under the guidance of the Holy Spirit "will also be impelled, through his inner hearing, to true obedience which makes him obey even in outward matters."

As individuals, the Brethren followed the example of Christ and the apostles. As a community, they followed the example of the early church. While they generally allowed for individual differences in application, they also held one another accountable for their understanding of Scripture and their obedience to it. We would do well to recover their vision of Christ's Lordship. We might then make obedience a commitment rather than an afterthought and find ways to incorporate mutual, loving accountability into our own church fellowships.

When we move beyond individual passages and attempt to understand what the Bible teaches as a whole, we must know how to compare Scripture with Scripture. Since the Reformation, when Luther declared the principle *sola scriptura* (Scripture alone), Protestants have agreed that the Bible is its own best interpreter. The parts of Scripture should be understood in the light of the whole of Scripture, obscure passages in the light of clear passages, and particular statements in the light of universal principles.

How Brethren Understand God's Word (1993) states that the early Brethren took a "harmonizing, Christ-centered approach" to comparing Scripture with Scripture. It was a harmonizing approach because they used all relevant passages in both Old and New Testaments. When Mack discusses marriage, for example, he places passages from Genesis, Deuteronomy, Leviticus, Matthew, 1 Corinthians, and Ephesians side by side. This approach led the Brethren to practice a Communion service that combined the footwashing recorded in John's gospel with the bread and cup recorded in the synoptic gospels and the *agape* meal found in all accounts. It was also a Christ-centered approach because the final arbiter in all questions of interpretation was the person, mission, teaching, and example of Christ.

Implications for today

This approach has significant implications for Brethren today. If we apply it, we can allow the person and message of Christ to determine for us what is central and what is peripheral. We can interpret biblical passages within the framework of the Bible's central theme, God's purpose to create a people for Himself in Christ. We can place biblical passages in the context of the gradual revelation of God's character and will that climaxed in the person of His Son, the Living Word. In our teaching, preaching, and decisions about doctrine and practice, we can give the words and example of Jesus at least as much weight as the words of Paul. Finally, we can ask ourselves if all of our interpretations accord with the truth of Christ and reflect the spirit of Christ.

Interpreting the Bible can sometimes be a challenge, but it is also a joy. No other book can bring us the message of salvation and equip us to live full and fruitful lives as Christ's disciples (2 Tim. 3:15-17). No other book can give us the words of life (John 6:68). May we do our best to present ourselves to God as those approved by Him, accurately interpreting the word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15). [⇧]



Sharing Our Faith

By Ronald W. Waters
Director of Brethren Church Ministries

THE SECOND of the four Brethren Church "Priorities for the Nineties" is *"Sharing Our Faith*—to burden, stimulate, and equip persons to share the good news of Jesus Christ through both words and actions through local church implementation of the Passing On the Promise outreach process, leading to Brethren people sharing their faith in a lifestyle of friendship evangelism."

The goal of this priority is to nudge Brethren people into active and effective sharing of their faith. The recommended means for doing this is the Passing On the Promise (POtP) process. Presently, just under 40 percent of all Brethren churches are participating in POtP. Several churches not participating in POtP have outreach ministries that are attempting to accomplish the same goal.

From the evangelism survey conducted in Brethren churches last summer/fall (*see a report on pages 12–14 of the December 1993 EVANGELIST*), it became apparent to me that *every* Brethren church needs a comprehensive plan of evangelism if we as individual congregations and as a denomination are to accomplish this priority and be faithful witnesses for Christ.

In his book, *DAWN 2000: 7 Million Churches to Go* (Pasadena, California: William Carey Library, 1989), Jim Montgomery describes "13 Steps to a Successful Growth Program." Montgomery identified these steps while studying denominational evangelism emphases in the Philippines. While his steps are based on denominational and nationwide programs, they seem to apply equally to local church evangelism strategies.

Step One: Dream great dreams; see large visions.

It is only when we dream God-sized dreams that we will be challenged to reach out to the lost in significant ministry. Montgomery says that growing churches "have a vision larger than themselves. They have a driving concern to see their whole region, their whole country won for Christ. . . . They want to be part of something bigger than themselves" (*p. 212*).

Step Two: Develop, maintain, and use a solid base of data.

Leaders of successful outreach strategies "not only have their heads in the clouds but have their feet on the ground. They see that the way to accomplish their dreams is not through sentimental, emotional fantasizing, but through a concrete understanding of their situation" (*p. 213*).

It is possible to become preoccupied with research data when, instead, the amount of information needed for planning is not overwhelming. The details needed fall into two categories: (1) information about the community the church wants to reach; and (2) information about the church's own history of outreach and its resources available for evangelizing that community.



Develop a solid base of data.

Step Three: Set challenging, realistic, and measurable goals.

"Challenging goals stir up and mobilize the people. . . . Realistic goals are set so as not to discourage people. . . . Measurable goals are set so the people can rejoice in their achievement" (*p. 213*).

You've heard the quotation, "I shot an arrow into the air. It fell to earth, I know not where." You lose a lot of arrows that way! Goals give a church something to shoot for collectively, and they give us a benchmark for evaluating how effective we've been.

Montgomery says that "goals set under the guidance of the Spirit are 'the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen' (Hebrews 11:1)" (*p. 214*).

Step Four: Achieve goal ownership

Involve the congregation in setting the goals. One way to accomplish this is to include a form in the Sunday bulletin asking individuals to indicate how much growth they can trust God for over, say, the next five years.

We used such a process regarding growth in Sunday school and worship attendance when I was pastoring. Some had little faith that the church could grow; others had faith that far outstripped mine. The average was for a 10 percent per year increase in worship attendance and a 9.25 percent increase in Sunday school attendance. The church continues to reach and exceed those goals because those attending the church

"Following all the principles of evangelism and church growth does not automatically produce an effective outreach strategy. Generally, little outreach happens without concerted prayer for the lost."

had a part in setting the goals and accepted their share of responsibility for seeing them accomplished.

Step Five: Give a name to your program.

Montgomery asks, "How would your children feel if they were given no names? Lost, ignored, unimportant! So a program needs a strong identity if it is to be supported and completed. Give it a good name" (*p. 214*).

Step Six: Develop a functional organizational structure.

Growing churches often have to adapt or totally redesign their organization. Merely changing the organization will generally not cause a church to grow, but change may be necessary to accommodate and capitalize on growth.

One example is the local church governing board. Win Arn has said that in a typical growing church, one of every five members of the church board is a person who started attending that church within the past two years (*The Church Growth Ratio Book*, Pasadena, California: Church Growth Press, 1987, pp. 14–15).

For many churches, that poses a problem—new members are not well known and thus fare poorly in "popularity contests" (alias, church elections). Church growth consultant George Hunter has suggested that churches permit the appointment of some new members to their board, thus expanding board size slightly but not requiring the removal of valued and experienced board members.

Step Seven: Depend on prayer and the power of the Spirit.

Following all the principles of evangelism and church growth does not automatically produce an effective outreach strategy. Generally, little outreach happens without concerted prayer for the lost.

Too often we pray, "Lord, help the missionaries," without remembering them to Him by name and by specific needs. Likewise, too often we pray, "Lord, help us reach the lost in our community" without being very specific about those who need to be reached for Christ and about their particular life situations.

Sunday school classes and home Bible study/share groups would be blessed by spending part of their time together praying for specific persons who need to know Christ as saving Lord. Another helpful approach is to have a time in each worship service for prayer for lost people.

Concerts of prayer and prayer vigils for the lost may also prove effective in appropriating the power of the Holy Spirit in outreach ministries.

Step Eight: Keep your members motivated and informed.

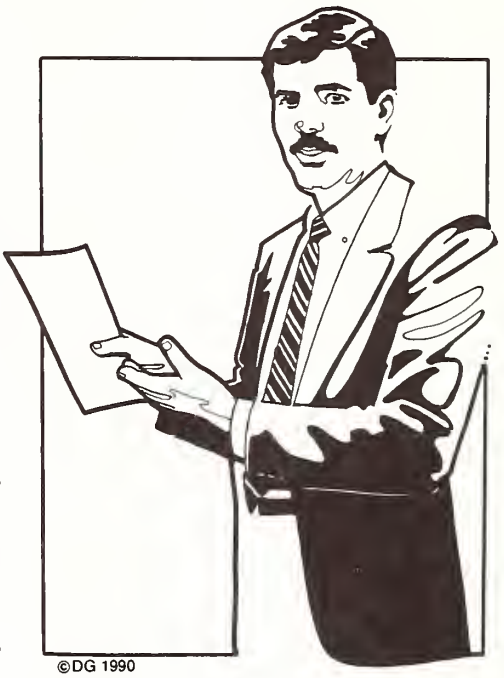
Outreach ministries that happen in secret generate little enthusiasm or broad support from the congregation. The church needs to hear about:

- training opportunities;
- changed lives as a result of outreach ministries;
- practical ways they may become involved in outreach.

Step Nine: Train your members.

We usually do not participate in a ministry that we do not understand or don't know how to accomplish. Sharing the faith seems to come naturally for new believers; those of us who have been people of faith for some time may have lost our enthusiasm or ability for sharing that faith.

Outreach strategies that effectively involve many people will recognize and affirm a variety of



Train your members.

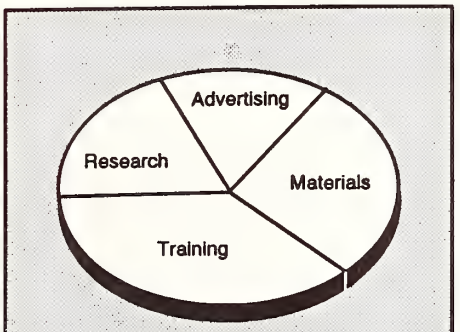
approaches. One size does not fit all! Some people will prefer door-to-door visitation, some a "Four Spiritual Laws" approach, while others may be willing to make telephone follow-up calls. Some will be willing to be part of a nucleus for forming a new church, while others would lead an evangelistic home Bible study. Some would use a friendship style of evangelism with friends, relatives, work associates, and neighbors. Training different persons in different approaches will enable them to reach out in ways that match their spiritual gifts, natural abilities, and Spirit-given passions.

Step Ten: Create sound financial policy.

While one-to-one evangelism requires little or no money in and of itself, mobilizing a congregation to action does. Few (probably no) Brethren churches invest too much money in local evangelism and outreach. Effective outreach strategies will require funds for training, materials, advertising, and research.

In the event that a church has

"The purpose of an evangelism strategy is not to reach an end but to come to points of new beginning. Our evangelism emphasis may only end when every person in the world is won to Christ or when the Lord returns to consummate this age."



Effective outreach strategies will require funds.

limited funds, ministries which receive financial expenditures may have to be measured against their effectiveness at accomplishing the Great Commission. Some good ministries may have to be laid aside to accomplish greater ministries of outreach, evangelism, and mission.

Step Eleven: Send out missionaries.

Not everyone who needs to be reached in our communities will be won to our own congregations. Even rural communities today include groups of persons from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds, ethnic groups, and alternative lifestyles. In our own communities we may need to commission and support cross-cultural witnesses who can present the gospel in ways that will be understandable to those who are "not like us."

Studies have also shown that churches that have a strong emphasis on world missions may also be more sensitive to outreach in their local community. The strategy of the local church, outlined in Acts 1:8, calls for reaching our own communities (Jerusalem), our broader area (Judea), those within geographical reach but of different cultural backgrounds (Samaria), and the world. Our local outreach ministries must not deter us from the broader mission of Christ to "every nation, tribe, people, and language" (Revelation 7:9).

Step Twelve: Regularly evaluate progress.

Montgomery says, "The strength of having measurable goals is that it is always possible to see just where you are in relation to those goals. . . . Leaders . . . must constantly be aware of progress being made toward goals, problems that are arising in any of these 13 steps we are presenting, and new opportunities and trends in their community, region, and nation" (*pp. 218–219*).

Evaluation is the one thing that most of us avoid like the plague. We fear evaluation because it may reveal failure. But evaluation may also reveal successes, challenges, and new leadings of the Holy Spirit. An annual assessment of progress will keep an outreach strategy on track with what is happening and headed where God is leading.

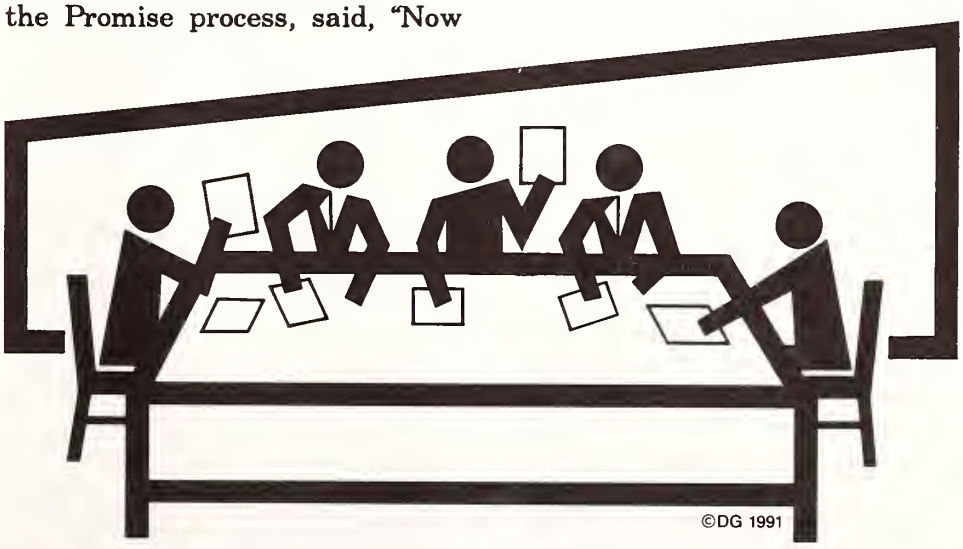
Step Thirteen: Make new plans.

I've heard of one church that, upon completing the Passing On the Promise process, said, "Now that we are done with evangelism, we can get on to other things." The purpose of an evangelism strategy is not to reach an end but to come to points of new beginning. Our evangelism emphasis may only end when every person in the world is won to Christ or when the Lord returns to consummate this age.

Evaluation will suggest new goals, new ministries, new approaches, new people-groups needing to be reached. Careful planning will lead to further outreach and additional people won to saving faith in Jesus Christ.

Now what? If your church is participating in Passing On the Promise or is involved in another outreach emphasis, evaluate your implementation of the process with these thirteen steps. What are its strengths? What are its weaknesses? How may you build on the strengths and overcome the weaknesses?

If your church does not have a corporate outreach strategy, use these steps in formulating an effective and aggressive ministry for evangelizing your community. The Lord expects our best, and He expects us to be reaching the lost in our communities. [⇧]



Regularly evaluate progress and make new plans.



Witnessing That Comes Naturally

MOST CHRISTIANS know they are supposed to be witnesses to their faith in Jesus Christ. They want to be witnesses. But they just don't know how. Or they've tried to bear witness to their faith, but it hasn't gone quite as smoothly as they would like.

If that describes you, the *Living Proof* small-group video discussion series is for you!

No special talent needed

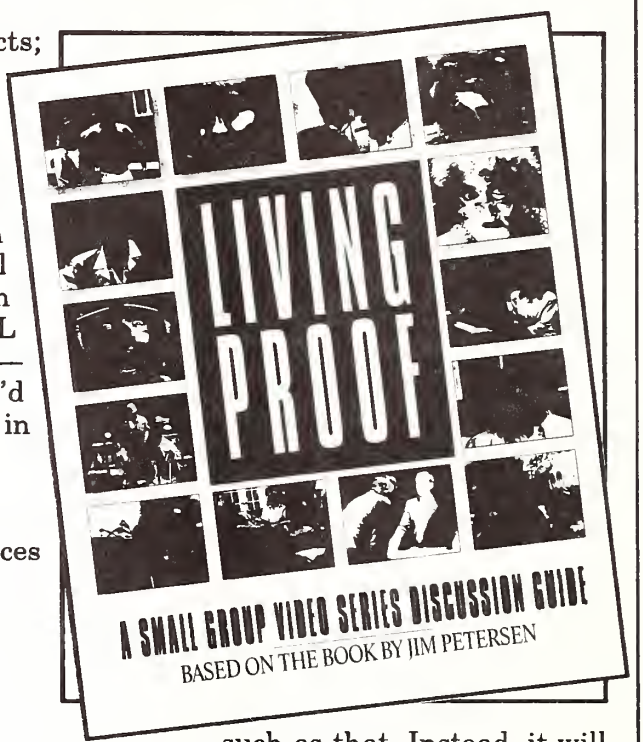
According to NavPress, publishers of *Living Proof*, "Witnessing can be as natural as a cup of coffee with a neighbor or a lively tennis game with a co-worker. You don't need a special talent for it. You only need to find common ground with non-Christians, communicate in a way they can relate to, and demonstrate a friendly, Bible-centered lifestyle in their midst." You, too, can become "living proof" of the Good News of saving faith in Jesus Christ.

Churches that are in Level One of the Passing On the Promise process will be offering *Living Proof* this winter or spring. Most will offer the study in home discussion groups, Sunday evening/midweek services, or in Sunday school classes. You'll want to participate in the study when it is offered in your church.

> ***"Witnessing can be as natural as a cup of coffee with a neighbor or a lively tennis game with a co-worker."***

The study includes twelve sessions. Each session includes: warm-up questions; a video segment (ten to twenty minutes in length); discussion questions; prayer time; take-home action projects; and an optional mini-Bible study.

During the course of the twelve sessions, participants will develop closer relationships with one another through small prayer groups. You'll even create your own TMWL (Ten Most Wanted List—ten non-believers you'd like to see come to faith in Jesus Christ.



Session topics include:

- The Culture Gap
- Our Spiritual Resources
- Mini-Decisions
- Finding Common Ground
- Being a Good Testimony
- Time and Teamwork
- Sparking Interest with Questions
- Making the Decision

As you watch each video segment, you'll join members of a lifestyle evangelism class as they, too, learn to be "living proof" in their daily contacts. The drama is real—you'll see them struggle with challenging questions and share in their discoveries. And you'll learn from their successes and failures as well.

Each participant in the study will receive a comprehensive discussion guide with helpful insights, discussion questions, and space to take notes.

No high pressure

While lessons include action projects, no one will force you to do something you don't want to do. This course is not a pretense to get you involved in a cold-call visitation program or anything such as that. Instead, it will give you the help you need and want to be a witness in the day-to-day encounters of your life.

The Northgate Community Brethren Church of Manteca, California, used *Living Proof* in its adult and high school Sunday school classes last winter. Pastor Roger Stogsdill says, "People who perceive themselves to be unable to 'knock on doors' or remember lengthy systems of presenting their faith said they felt they could easily do the things suggested in *Living Proof*."

Make every effort to take part in this life-changing study. You may find that you, too, will become "living proof." [⇧]

Note: *Churches not participating in Passing On the Promise and individuals interested in this study may also purchase the* Living Proof *small-group video series from The Brethren Church National Office for the special discounted price of $99.00.*

Cheyenne, Wyo., Brethren Church Celebrates Completion of Ten-Year Remodeling Project

Cheyenne, Wyo. — Members and friends of the Cheyenne Brethren Church celebrated the completion of a ten-year building and remodeling project on their church building on Sunday evening, November 21, with a dedication service and Thanksgiving dinner.

The ten-year project included enlarging and remodeling the sanctuary; adding two classrooms, a pastor's office, a restroom for the handicapped, a new kitchen, and a storeroom; remodeling the basement; constructing a wheelchair ramp; and making other improvements. The project cost more than $250,000, but by dedication day more than $175,000 of that had been paid.



Exterior view of the remodeled Cheyenne Church building.

Ground-breaking for the building/remodeling project was held in the fall of 1983, with then pastor Rev. Albert Curtright and building committee chair Bill Pauli presiding. In June of the following year, Rev. Curtright retired, and the current pastor, Rev. G. Emery Hurd, began serving the congregation. The work of enlarging and remodeling the sanctuary was completed in 1986, and the sanctuary, which will seat about 200, was dedicated on Easter Sunday of that year.



Some of the 106 people who attended the dedication service and Thanksgiving dinner.

Approximately 105 people attended the November 1993 dedication service and Thanksgiving dinner, including former pastor Rev. Albert Curtright and his wife, and former interim pastor Alwyn D. Wegner and his wife and daughter. Pastor Hurd conducted the service. Poems they had written for the occasion were read by Carol McAffee and June Vitley.

The Cheyenne Brethren Church was organized on August 25, 1944, under the leadership of Frank Garber. Land for a church building was purchased in 1947 and the completed building was dedicated in 1949. At the end of 1993 the membership of the congregation was 70, with an average Sunday worship attendance in 1993 of 53.

— reported by Alice M. Tharp

Pastoral Family Retreat To be Held April 19 to 21

Elkhart, Ind. — The 1994 Pastoral Family Retreat (or Pastors' Conference) will be held April 19–21 at the Brown County State Park near Nashville, Ind.

Speakers for the retreat will be Dr. Charles Lake and Dr. Jay Kesler. Dr. Lake is the founding pastor of Community Church of Greenwood, Ind., a unique 15-year-old interdenominational congregation with an annual missions budget of more than a half-million dollars. In addition to his pastoral duties, Dr. Lake serves as an adjunct professor at Anderson School of Theology, Bethel College Graduate School in Mishawaka, Ind., and at the Indianapolis extension of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. Dr. Lake, along with a drama team from his church, will conduct a worship service on the opening evening (Tuesday) of the retreat.

Dr. Kesler is president of Taylor University, an interdenominational Christian liberal arts institution located in Upland and Fort Wayne, Ind. He has also been active in Youth for Christ ministries in various positions, is the author of 15 books, and has written articles for numerous evangelical publications. Dr. Kesler will speak on Wednesday morning and evening of the retreat.

Another feature of the retreat will be a time of worship and praise on Thursday morning led by the Singing Thomas Family (former Brethren pastor Rev. Rod Thomas, his wife Barb, and their children Tim and Tiffany).

Pastors are encouraged to bring wives and children to the retreat. Child care will be provided for very young children, and an entertaining agenda is planned for other children.

Registration fees for the retreat (which cover lodging, program, and all meals except Wednesday lunch) are $210 for couples and $115 for individuals (double occupancy; $165 single occupancy). The charge is $38 for children 12 and older, $25 for children 3 to 11, with no charge for children under 3.

Arrival time is Tuesday afternoon (April 19), with the retreat getting underway that evening at 6:00 with dinner. The retreat will conclude at noon on Thursday (April 21).

Churches are encouraged to make it possible for pastors and their families to attend this time of spiritual refreshment, fellowship, and blessing.



Brethren Fellowship of the Savior Begins Construction of Its Own Church Facility

Cleveland, Ohio — After much struggle and sacrifice, construction has finally begun on the initial church facility of the Brethren Fellowship of the Savior.

Nearly every step of the way has been an uphill battle. Only at the beginning was it easy. When the church started with 15 members in 1983, they had plenty of room in the beautiful little Lutheran Church on Taylor Avenue in Shaker Heights, Ohio. Trinity Lutheran Church of Ashland, Ohio, paid the rent.

But this sanctuary that could easily accommodate 200 was soon filled. Brethren Fellowship struggled to find a place in which to worship, sing, and hear the word preached. Finally, St. Benedictine offered its facilities—at $2,000 a month! Attendance reached 1,000.

The church elders searched and searched for land. They find ten acres in Solon, Ohio, and buy it. But guess what: they are refused a building permit! Then 13 acres are located in East Cleveland/Warrensville Heights, close to Interstate 271, Interstate 480, and Chagrin Boulevard—an excellent location costing $240,000.

But the mayor of Cleveland and the mayor of Warrensville get into a tug of war over the property. Pastor Ron Williams must spend time each day at city hall smoothing feathers and pulling strings. The struggle reaches the front page of the Cleveland newspaper. Finally, the president of Cleveland's city council votes in favor of the church. But council requires another $125,000 in "site preparation."

An architect is hired and plans are drawn, costing another $90,000. Financing now becomes the big issue. Banks hesitate; one promises, then reneges. Finally, Star Bank (the smaller one in town) offers a $1.3 million loan. But the church is required to have $400,000 on deposit.

The people sacrifice: they empty their savings accounts, take out second mortgages, take on second jobs, limit their Christmas giving, and pray for some special gifts. Pastor Williams gives his personal "record account"; the Burlington, Ind., First Brethren Church and the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church each lend $50,000.

The church building of the Brethren Fellowship of the Savior will be the largest Brethren church facility ever built in an American city. It will seat 1,350! The completion date is set for this June.

God is already honoring this vision and sacrifice. One evening last August during General Conference, 54 new Christians were baptized by trine immersion into the membership of the church.

— reported by Dr. Joseph R. Shultz

Linwood Brethren Take Tour Of Brethren Historical Sites

Linwood, Md. — A Brethren Heritage Tour was part of the annual missionary conference held last November at the Linwood Brethren Church.

Twenty-eight people met at the Linwood Church building at 8:00 a.m. on a Saturday morning for the all-day tour. The first stop, after a 2½-hour bus ride, was at the Germantown Church of the Brethren, Philadelphia, Pa. This is the location of the first Brethren meeting house to be built in America (constructed in 1770). The members of the Linwood group were given a tour of the building and also shown an informative video about the history of the church.

Following lunch, the next stop on the tour was the site on the Wissahickon Creek, where, on December 25, 1723, the first Brethren baptism in America was held. As a result of viewing this site and of talking about the importance of baptism, two of the women on the tour decided that they wanted to be baptized by trine immersion. (Their baptism was to take place on Sunday, January 30, 1994, in the new stainless steel baptistry of the Linwood Brethren Church, quite a contrast to the cold waters of the Wissahickon Creek!)



Linwood Pastor Bob Keplinger and his assistant, Ronald Miller, Sr., in front of the Germantown church building, the first Brethren meeting house in America.

After this chilly visit to the stream, tour members boarded the warm bus and traveled to the Ephrata Cloister at Ephrata, Pa. There they toured the grounds and learned more about these early Brethren, who splintered from the main group and followed Conrad Beissel, a leader who encouraged communal living, celibacy, seventh-day observance, and a rigorous and austere lifestyle.

Apparently unconvinced that they should imitate the Ephrata way of life, the Linwood group went next to the Family Times—a Pennsylvania Dutch restaurant where you can eat all you want—for their evening meal. They then returned to Linwood.

— reported by Pastor Bob Keplinger

Here is the answer to stress, regardless of its origin, nature, or intensity: Let the pressure drive you to the Source of all your strength, peace, and stability—the person of Jesus Christ.

— From *A Touch of His Peace* by Charles Stanley (ZondervanPublishingHouse, 1993)

Bradenton Church Honors Rev. Buck Garrett For His Thirty-Five Years as a Brethren Pastor

Bradenton, Fla. — An unsuspecting Pastor Buck Garrett was the honoree at a Thanksgiving dinner held November 21 at the Bradenton Brethren Church.

Rev. Garrett, who has served the Bradenton congregation for the past four years, was honored for his total of 35 years as a Brethren pastor. Since entering the pastoral ministry at age 23, Rev. Garrett has served Brethren congregations in Matteson, Mich.; Cheyenne, Wyo.; Lathrop, Calif.; Fort Scott, Kans. (as well as the Paint Creek Church of the Brethren); Muncie, Ind.; Dutchtown, Ind.; and Bradenton, Fla.



Moderator Enos Shrock (r.), on behalf of the Bradenton Brethren Church, presents Pastor Buck Garrett a plaque honoring him for his 35 years in pastoral ministry.

Approximately 60 church members and guests attended the dinner at which Pastor Garrett was honored. Special guests were the pastor's mother, Lora Garrett, from Muskogee, Oklahoma; and one of Rev. and Mrs. (Sarah) Garrett's four sons, James W. Garrett, pastor of the Lanark, Ill., Brethren Church.

Remarks—humorous and serious—about Rev. Garrett were made by Bradenton moderator Enos Shrock. Jim Garrett, on behalf of himself and his three brothers, gave a beautiful testimony about their father. Moderator Shrock presented Pastor Garrett with a beautiful plaque that reads, "Presented to Rev. Buck Garrett in honor of his 35 years in faithful ministry."

The Garrett's daughter-in-law, Elizabeth, closed the program with a beautiful message in song.

— reported by Hillary Pemelman



New Paris, Ind. — *Thirteen people were received as members of the New Paris First Brethren Church on Nov. 7, and a 14th on Dec. 26. Thirteen of the 14 were received by baptism, all baptized in Lake Waubee at Camp Mack (five in late October!). Shown in the group picture are (1st row, l. to r.) Keeton Zartman, Kenny Sweet, Kelsey Hoover, Diane Stout, (2nd row) Kyla Zartman, Rebekah Hardesty, Aadam Nicholson, Trina Hoover, (3rd row) Penny & LeRoy Zartman, Jason Culp, Pastor Brad Hardesty, and Stephen & Laura Byrd. In the insert, Joshua Culp.*

World Relief Helping With Church-Based Response to S. California Earthquake

Wheaton, Ill. — World Relief of the National Association of Evangelicals and a coalition of churches in southern California are mounting a united Christian relief response to meet the needs of California earthquake survivors.

Christian leaders who led a similar response to the Midwest floods will join World Relief workers on the scene to help guide the church-based response.

"This is exciting to see churches banding together as they did after the floods," reported David Loudon, Disaster Response Director for World Relief. "Based on our experience in Iowa, it's the church that stays long after the disaster is over meeting the deep needs of people."

During the Midwest floods last year, World Relief helped the newly-formed Christian Relief Effort (CRE), an interdenominational, 52-church strong coalition. These Christians manned volunteer clean-up crews, provided building supplies, offered trauma counseling—all with a Christian perspective.

Gary Jones, director of CRE and pastor of First Assembly of God Church in Des Moines, is assisting World Relief staff in California to help churches mount a similar united evangelical response. The coalition of churches will coordinate its ministries from the First Assembly of God Church in North Hollywood.

Bas Vanderzalm, World Relief's international ministries director, is also in southern California working with World Relief's local Garden Grove office to help coalition churches identify victims who are "falling through the cracks," such as the disabled, foreign nationals, etc., and meeting with denominational leaders to help local churches define meaningful ways to assist victims.

World Relief is also in contact with other evangelical churches in the earthquake area in order to remain updated on current and evolving needs.

Brethren can support World Relief's church-based relief efforts in California by sending contributions to The Brethren Church, 524 College Ave., Ashland, OH 44805. Please indicate that your contribution is for "Earthquake Relief."

Suffering is God's way of helping us get our minds on the hereafter. God wishes to instill within each of us a strong desire for the imperishable, for the incorruptible, for the inheritance that never perishes, spoils, or fades.

— From *Diamonds in the Dust* by Joni Eareckson Tada (ZondervanPublishingHouse, 1993)

From The Grape Vine

Telephone interviews of Brethren people by **Norman Edwards**, the facilitator working with the Special Committee on Financial and Organizational Planning, are to begin the week of February 7. Edwards and his staff will be calling 100 Brethren, half of them lay people and half clergy, with each district represented in the 100 according to its size. Edwards will present his findings to the General Conference Executive Council at its March 17–18 meeting.

"Friend Day" on December 5 at the **Bradenton, Fla., Brethren Church** created some excitement when 122 people attended the Celebration Service and 82 of them stayed for the fellowship meal that followed. The six weeks of effort leading up to Friend Day paid off, for attendance on that day was double the normal attendance, and several of those who came for that occasion are continuing to attend.

Dr. Leslie E. and Ida Lindower were recognized for their many years of service to Brethren Care nursing facility in Ashland, Ohio, by having one of the rooms in the new Brethren Care Village facility named in their honor. (*See page 15 of the January* EVANGELIST *for an article about this new facility.*) Lindower Hall is the dining room/multipurpose area in the new facility, which was dedicated on January 16. The late Dr. Lindower was a member of the Board of Directors of Brethren Care for a number of years and, during his retirement, served for 17 years as chaplain to the residents. Mrs. Lindower continues to put in many volunteer hours at the nursing facility visiting and reading to residents, writing letters for them, and ministering to them in other ways.

Not to be outdone by President Clinton, **Rev. Kenneth Hunn**, pastor of the Nappanee, Ind., First Brethren Church, presented his own State of the Union (Church) address on Sunday, January 16. Though similar in concept to the State of the Union address, some things were different: no formal announcement of Rev. Hunn's arrival to speak, no applause during the address, and certainly no opportunity for a dissenting speech afterward. But like the President's, Rev. Hunn's address pointed out past accomplishments, current deficiencies, and future solutions. It also examined the church according to biblical standards, looked at the congregation's particularly vision and mission in the Nappanee community, and gave the members of the congregation an opportunity for commitment.

The **Goshen, Ind., First Brethren Church** recently received a new brass chancel cross, presented to the church in honor of **Wilbur and Helen Whittle** on the occasion of their 65th wedding anniversary (*see* ***Goldenaires*** *below*). The cross was given by the Whittles' daughter and son-in-law, Pat and David Bartholomew, and their children.

Moderator-Elect James Koontz, pastor of the Louisville, Ohio, First Brethren Church, will be the speaker at the **Ohio District Conference**, to be held March 12 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. at the Gretna Brethren Church near Bellefontaine, Ohio. Moderator James Rowsey, pastor of the Smithville, Ohio, Brethren Church, will preside at the Conference.



Newark, Ohio — A newly formed puppet team presented a Christmas program December 19 at Newark Brethren Church. The puppets were made by Peggy Cole and the stage by Rev. Jerald Radcliff. Puppeteers were Angie Boyce, Whitney Snedeker, Tiffany Ford, Jennifer and Peggy Cole.
— reported by Pastor Steve Cole

In Memory

Margaret E. James, 94, January 17. Member of the Pleasant View Brethren Church. (No funeral service was held.)

Martha Stewart, 98, January 14. Member and deaconess at the Pleasant View Brethren Church, where she served as a Sunday school teacher, faithful attender and encourager, and was a charter member of the local Woman's Missionary Society. Services by Pastor R. Keith Hensley.

Blanche Price, 93, January 11. Lifelong member and deaconess for many years at the Vinco Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Jim Tomb.

Kenneth C. Erbsen, 62, January 7. Member and longtime deacon at the Lanark First Brethren Church, where he was moderator at the time of his death and had served on various committees and was involved in many local church activities. He was also president of the Illinois Holstein Association. Services by Pastor Jim Garrett and Rev. Bob Schubert.

Dorothy Stuzman, 88, January 2. Faithful member for 66 years of the Warsaw First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Mitchell Funkhouser.

Helen Dumire, 97, December 31. Member since 1938 of the Waterloo Hammond Avenue Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Ronald L. Waters.

Carrie Zinn, 91, December 31. Charter member of the Flora First Brethren Church (and the church's final charter member to pass away).

Ethel V. Hagerich, 88, December 29. Lifelong member of the Vinco Brethren Church, where she served as Sunday school greeter and was a member of the W.M.S. Services by Pastor Jim Tomb.

Edna Deibert, 90, December 26. Member for 79 years of the St. James Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Brian Moore.

Carleton D. Cory, Sr., 88, December 21. Member of the Flora First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Alvin Grumbling.

Dale Jennings, 81, October 12. Longtime friend of the Warsaw First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Mitchell Funkhouser.

Goldenaires

John and Eleanor Porte, 55th, January 8. Members of the South Bend First Brethren Church. Mr. Porte served from 1959 to 1967 as Field Secretary of The Brethren Church.

Wilbur and Helen Whittle, December 1. Members of the Goshen First Brethren Church. (*This was incorrectly reported as Wilbur and Helen Gorsuch in the January* EVANGELIST. *Our apologies to the Whittles.*)

Membership Growth

Bradenton: 2 by baptism

Cheyenne: 2 by baptism, 2 by transfer

Pleasant Hill: 3 by baptism, 1 by transfer

Pleasant View: 1 by baptism, 2 by transfer

Little Crusader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

Hi boys and girls!

Did you send your valentines to your friends and relatives yet? My boys enjoy getting a list of the names of the children in their classes at school and choosing just the right valentine for each class member. It's also fun to receive valentines in the mail from people you care about and who care about you.

You know, Jesus gave us a very big valentine—the Bible—to teach us about love. Did you know that the word *love* is used in the Bible more than 500 times?

The Bible also tells us how much we should love one another. There are many places in the Bible that tell us that we should love others as much as we love ourselves.

Since Jesus tells us so much about love, we should find it easy to remember how much He loves us and how much we should love one another. Let's remember this month to tell others we love them or to send them valentines to show them our love.

♥♥♥

Look up these verses in the Bible. Find the missing words and write them in the blanks.

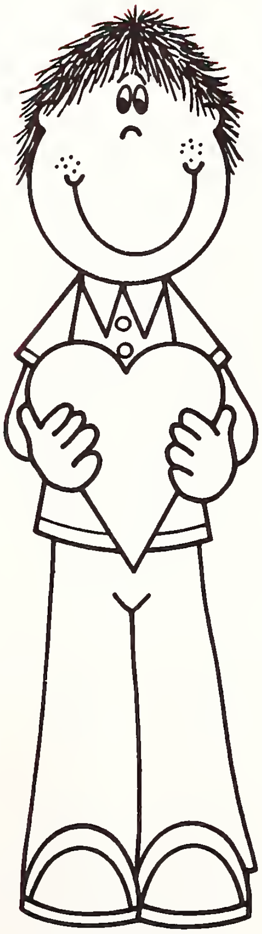
1. Love your _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ as yourself.
   Mark 12:31*

2. I love you, O LORD, my _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _.
   Psalm 18:1

3. As the _ _ _ _ _ _ has loved me, so have I loved you.
   John 15:9

4. Now . . . love one another deeply, from the _ _ _ _ _.
   1 Peter 1:22

*Quotations from the Bible are taken from the *New International Version*.



Color me.

Use the Code Key to decode this message in order to find out what Jesus wants us to do.

Code Key

33 = A	26 = L
77 = B	45 = N
19 = C	66 = O
51 = D	40 = R
80 = E	79 = S
93 = H	36 = T
17 = I	83 = U
20 = J	10 = V

Message

77 80 26 17 80 10 80 17 45

20 80 79 83 79 19 93 40 17 79 36

33 45 51 26 66 10 80

66 45 80 33 45 66 36 93 80 40.

February is "Have a Heart" Month

♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥

This month you have the opportunity to have a heart for the lost in your community.

Who are the lost? **All who have not accepted the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ and who have not made Him Lord of their lives. Many in our communities are lost and headed for an eternity of separation from God.**

You can help reach the lost by giving to the "Have a Heart" offering this month. Brethren churches will receive an offering this month — many on February 13. Up to one-half of the gift you give through your local church will provide funding to help with local outreach ministry.

The other half will help The Brethren Church with supporting costs for Passing On the Promise nationwide.

Our goal this month is ***$5.00 per person or $10.00 per family***. That's only a small amount per person, but it has the potential of paying big dividends for God's kingdom as He multiplies the gifts of Brethren people across the country.

Thank you for your generous gift. And may God give you His heart for the lost!

Give through your local church, or send your gift to:

Have a Heart
The Brethren Church
524 College Ave.
Ashland, OH 44805

♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥

Have a



for the lost!

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THE BRETHREN
Evangelist
MARCH 1994



Readers' Forum

A column in which readers can share their thoughts and views with the Brethren.

Love is Action

THIS LETTER is in response to [the] article titled "Love as a Command" in the February 1994 issue of the EVANGELIST [p. 2].

I am frustrated again by someone taking the commands of Scripture only part of the way when talking about love. This concept is perhaps the most misunderstood aspect of Christianity, and until we take God's word at face value we will continue to struggle with this problem.

I agree with the assessment that this stems from contaminated thinking. We have allowed the world's concept of love as a feeling to pervade our thinking in the church. But the Bible says no such thing. According to God, *love is action*, not feeling.

First Corinthians 13:4–7 makes this abundantly clear: "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres."

If you can find a focus on feeling anywhere in that, please let me know.

I certainly don't want to deny that there is an aspect of our feelings keyed to love, but that feeling very readily follows when we make the choice to be obedient to Christ and live out the action—love.

Again, Jesus in Luke 6 describes what it means to love your enemies when He says, ". . . do good to those who hate you, . . . pray for those who mistreat you. . . . Give to everyone who asks you . . . ." All of this, done without animosity in our hearts, constitutes love.

Finally, love *is* a commitment of our will. We must commit ourselves to love as God loves, to give as He gives, to act as He calls us to act, whether we have feelings or not. We choose to be obedient.

"By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35). We cannot see feelings. We can see actions. We Brethren need to love one another.

RAY HESKETH
New Lebanon, Ohio

What Has God Done in Your Life?

How has God worked in your life? Has He done a wondrous deed? Has He acted in your life in a specific and dramatic way? Have you received a particular answer to prayer? If so, I'd like to share your experience with other members of The Brethren Church through the pages of the EVANGELIST.

I read about such experiences in other magazines. The regular features "His Mysterious Ways" and "This Thing Called Prayer" in *Guideposts* magazine come particularly to mind. I believe that Brethren people are also having these kinds of experiences. I also believe that we ought to build up one another in the faith by sharing these experiences, by declaring God's wonderful deeds in our lives.

If you have had such an experience and would be willing to share it with others, please write it out and send it to me. I will then decided whether it is suitable for publication in the EVANGELIST.

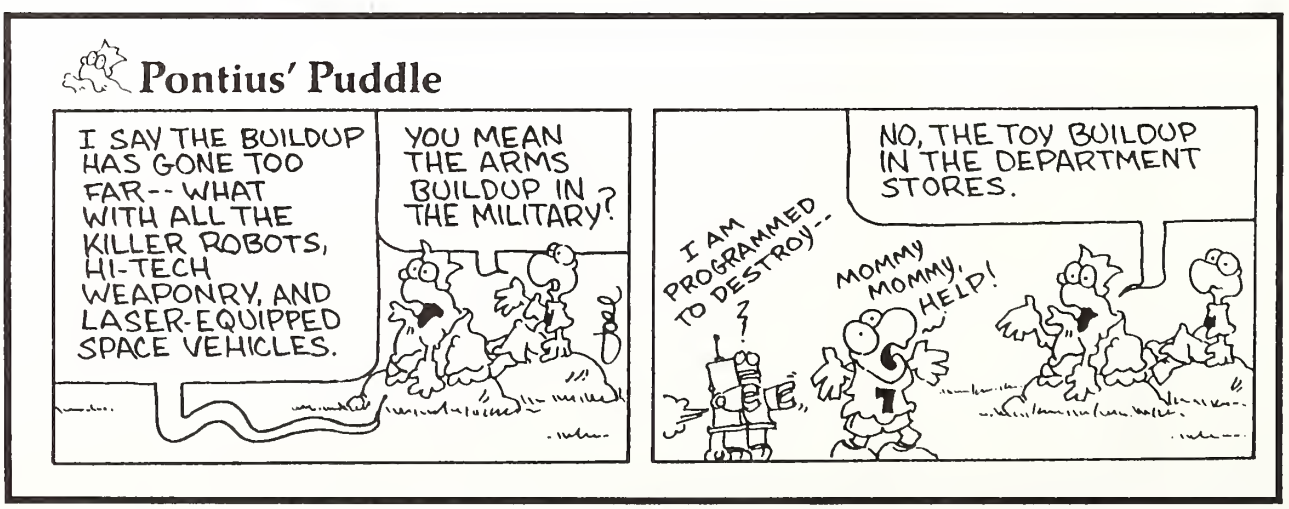
Don't worry about producing a polished article. Just concentrate on writing out your experience as clearly as possible. I'll work with you on preparing it for publication. A maximum of 500 words is suggested. Typewritten articles are preferred, but handwritten articles are acceptable.

Send your article to:

Richard Winfield, Editor
The Brethren Evangelist
524 College Ave.
Ashland, OH 44805

I look forward to hearing from many of you.

Dick Winfield, Editor



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The March–April *Woman's Outlook Newsletter* is in the center of this issue of the EVANGELIST.

Answers to the Little Crusader page:

Proverbs 17:17 says that a friend loves at all times,

Proverbs 18:24 speaks about a friend who sticks closer than a brother (or sister). Some people think that this Friend is Jesus.

John 15:13 says that the greatest love of all is to lay down your life (to die) for your friends. This is what Jesus did for us.

The scrambled phrase is "Friends are friends forever."

A History-Making Event in the "City of Lights"

By William Brady

LAS VEGAS, a city built on gaudiness, gambling, glitter, and greed, has witnessed many historic events over the years, from sports events and gambling payoffs to quickie weddings and assorted human misery.

The "City of Lights" entertained yet another history-making event January 3–5, 1994, as eight Brethren church-leaders from the California, Midwest, and Southwest Districts and three from the eastern U.S. met in Las Vegas for the first-ever Western Brethren Pastors Retreat. The event, hosted by the Southwest District pastors, consisted of worship, prayer, dreaming, vision-sharing, planning, and encouraging one another in ministry.



Participants in the first-ever Western Brethren Pastors Retreat were (kneeling, l. to r.) Jim McNiff, Emery Hurd, Randy Best, Russ Gordon, (standing, l. to r.) Dave Cooksey, Mark Logan, Dave West, Bill Curtis, Roger Stogsdill, Reilly Smith, and Bill Brady.

Those who came

Those attending the retreat from California were Rev. Roger Stogsdill (Manteca) and Rev. Randy Best (Stockton). Attending from the Midwest District were Rev. Reilly Smith (Mulvane, Kans., who is also moderator-elect of General Conference) and Rev. Emery Hurd (Cheyenne, Wyo.). Coming from the Southwest District (Arizona) were Rev. Bill Curtis, Mr. Jim McNiff, Rev. Dave West (Northwest Chapel, Tucson), and Rev. Bill Brady (Tucson First). Joining them from the East were Rev. Russ Gordon (General Conference moderator as well as Director of U.S. Ministries for the Missionary Board), Rev. Dave Cooksey (Director of Pastoral Ministries), and Rev. Mark Logan (340 Brethren Church, Elkton, Va.).

The opening worship set the tone for the retreat. Singing and praise were led by Roger Stogsdill and Jim McNiff. Dave West presented a devotional challenge from Haggai 2:1–9 which emphasized that our confidence for church growth comes from the Spirit of God, and therefore we have nothing to fear. The text emphasizes that God causes growth and increase, and that He will "shake the heavens and the earth . . . . and . . . fill [His] house with glory" (Haggai 2:6–7). It is our responsibility to get to work and to be obedient to the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

Purposes of the gathering

Each member of the group shared what he hoped to gain from our time together. It was evident from this that the Holy Spirit was already at work in the hearts of the participants, for each person, though separated by considerable distance from the others, was thinking along similar lines as the rest.

Three key areas of agreement emerged: First, we are about Kingdom business. Since it is God's work, it is bigger and grander than any of us can fathom. God is the source of and support for the work, and if we access His power, more can be accomplished than we ever dream possible.

Second, a cooperative vision for future ministry is crucial. The possibilities of what can be accomplished are limitless, if we are willing to apply ourselves to dreaming, planning, and implementing a vision for the work of Jesus Christ.

Third, church planting is essential. The challenge for church planting was so compelling that

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Rev. Brady is pastor of the Tucson, Ariz., First Brethren Church.

"We determined that to be effective, we must use our time together to do more than simply dream; we must put solid plans 'on the table' to be worked at and implemented."

our prayer is that someday there will be as many Brethren churches west of the Mississippi as there are east of that river.

Our time of worship concluded with eleven men at the Circus-Circus hotel bowed in prayer seeking God leadership of our discussions, dreams, and directions.

Areas of common concern

The sessions that followed considered areas of common concern to us pastors of the "far-flung districts" (we liked that description of our situation). These included such matters as mutual cooperation, needs, national and district issues, church planting, and pastoral support and care. We determined that to be effective, we must use our time together to do more than simply dream; we must put solid plans "on the table" to be worked at and implemented.



Prayer was an important part of the Western Brethren Pastors Retreat. Shown during the closing prayer session of the gathering, held in one of the hotel rooms in which they stayed, are (clockwise from left) Mark Logan, Bill Curtis, Reilly Smith, Randy Best, Roger Stogsdill, and Jim McNiff.

We also discussed problems such as loneliness, isolation, lack of connection with the national offices, unavailability of missionaries on furlough to visit western churches, cost and difficulties of attending General Conference, and distance between Brethren churches. On the positive side, we shared our hopes and dreams of planting new Brethren churches in the West, the challenge of discovering locations that would be receptive to new churches, and the possibilities for pastoral support during strenuous times.

But the retreat was more than a time to share dreams, vision, and enthusiasm. As one participant stated, "[It is] put up or shut up time since we have shared some of our goals. Now that everyone knows what we are thinking, we must now act on these goals."

Some of the decisions and plans we made are to be implemented in the near future. For example, the group agreed to meet again at this year's General Conference in August. Dave Cooksey will invite any students at Ashland Theological Seminary who may have an interest in working with the western Brethren churches to attend this meeting.

We also decided to create a prayer list that would encourage sharing, support, and someone to talk to during difficult times. The group also accepted the challenge to double the number of churches west of the Mississippi by the end of the century. This would mean planting eleven new congregations in the West.

Great Western Roundup

Undoubtedly, the most specific major action resulting from this retreat was the scheduling of the first "Great Western Brethren Roundup," set for June 23–25, 1995, in Denver, Colorado. This Roundup will be a dreaming and planning time for pastors and lay people from our western Brethren churches. It will provide an opportunity for fellowship (which these churches often miss out on because of the distance between them) and for mutual encouragement. It will also be a time for worship, sharing, planning (with an emphasis on planting new churches), and for developing a vision for what God is going to do in our region.

We also discussed at the retreat the possibility of merging the three western districts. We decided, however, that serious consideration of merger at this time was premature due to the distance between our churches, legal constraints, and our hopes to grow. Instead, emphasis was placed on those areas in which we can already mutually cooperate and encourage one another.

An exciting page of history

We concluded the retreat with a time of prayer for our shared ministries, the particular needs faced by our more isolated churches, and the needs of our pastoral families. Special prayer was offered for the city that hosted our meeting, which once again witnessed a page of history being written in its midst. For us Brethren, it was an exciting page that promises an interesting future. [†]

Whatever You Did Unto One of the Least, You Did Unto Me

By Mother Teresa of Calcutta

The following is the full text of an address presented by Mother Teresa to the National Prayer Breakfast, held February 3 in Washington, D.C. The address was received with much applause by many of those who attended that gathering.

ON THE LAST DAY, Jesus will say to those on His right hand, "Come, enter the Kingdom. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was sick and you visited me."

Then Jesus will turn to those on His left hand and say, "Depart from me, because I was hungry and you did not feed me, I was thirsty and you did not give me to drink, I was sick and you did not visit me." These will ask Him, "When did we see You hungry or thirsty or sick and did not come to Your help?" And Jesus will answer them, "Whatever you neglected to do unto one of the least of these, you neglected to do unto Me!"

A prayer for peace

As we have gathered here to pray together, I think it will be beautiful if we begin with a prayer that expresses very well what Jesus wants us to do for the least. St. Francis of Assisi understood very well these words of Jesus, and His life is very well expressed by a prayer. And this prayer, which we say every day after Holy Communion, always surprises me very much, because it is very fitting for each one of us. I always wonder whether 800 years ago when St. Francis lived, if they had the same difficulties that we have today. I think that some of you already have this prayer of peace, so we will pray it together.

Let us thank God for the opportunity He has given us today to come here to pray together. We have come here especially to pray for peace, joy, and love. We are reminded that Jesus came to bring the good news to the poor. He told us what that good news is when He said: "My peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you." He came not to give the peace of the world, which is only that we don't bother each other. He came to give the peace of heart, which comes from loving—from doing good to others.

No greater love

God loved the world so much that He gave His son—it was a giving. God gave His son to the Virgin Mary, and what did she do with Him? As soon as Jesus came into Mary's life, immediately she went in haste to give that good news. And as she came into the house of her cousin Elizabeth, Scripture tells us that the unborn child—the child in the womb of Elizabeth—leapt with joy. While still in the womb of Mary, Jesus brought peace to John the Baptist, who leapt for joy in the womb of Elizabeth.

And as if that were not enough, as if it were not enough that God the Son should become one of us and bring peace and joy while still in the womb of Mary, Jesus also died on the cross to show that greater love. He died for you and for me and for that leper and for that man dying of hunger and for that naked person lying in the street, not only of Calcutta, but of Africa and everywhere. Our Sisters serve these poor people in 105 countries throughout the world.

Jesus insisted that we love one another as He loves each one of us. Jesus gave His life to love us, and He tells us that we also have to give whatever it takes to do good to one another. And in the Gospel Jesus says very clearly, "Love as I have loved you."

Jesus died on the cross because that is what it took for Him to do good to us—to save us from our selfishness in sin. He gave up everything to do the Father's will—to show us that we too must be willing to give up everything to do God's will—to love one another as He loves each of us. If we are not willing to give whatever it takes to do good to one another, sin is still in us. That is why we too must give to each other until it hurts.

It is not enough for us to say, "I love God." I also have to love my neighbor. St. John says that you are a liar if you say you love God and you don't love your neighbor. How can you love God whom you do not see if you do not love your neighbor whom you see, whom you touch, with whom you live? And so it is very important for us to realize that love, to be true, has to hurt. I must be willing to give whatever it takes not to harm other people and, in fact, to do good to them. This requires that I be willing to give until it hurts. Otherwise, there is no true love in me and I bring injustice, not peace, to those around me.

We must "put on Christ"

It hurt Jesus to love us. We have been created in His image for greater things, to love and to be loved. We must "put on Christ," as Scripture tells us. And so, we have been created to love as He loved us. Jesus makes Himself the hungry one, the naked one, the homeless one, the unwanted one, and He says, "You did it to Me." On the last day He will say to those on His right, "Whatever you did to the least of these, you did to Me." And He will also say to those on His left, "Whatever you neglected to do for the least of these, you neglected to do it for Me."

When He was dying on the cross, Jesus said, "I thirst." Jesus is thirsting for our love, and this is the thirst of everyone, poor and rich alike. We all thirst for the love of others, that they go out of their way to avoid harming us and to do good to us. This is the meaning of true love, to give until it hurts.

I can never forget the experience I had visiting a home where they kept all these old parents of sons and daughters who had just put them into an institution and forgotten them. I saw that in that home these old people had everything—good food, a comfortable place, television, everything. But everyone was looking toward the door. And I did not see a single one with a smile on his or her

"I feel that the greatest destroyer of peace today is abortion, because it is a war against the child, a direct killing of the innocent child, murder by the mother herself."

face. I turned to Sister and I asked, "Why do these people who have every comfort here, why are they all looking toward the door? Why are they not smiling?"

I am so used to seeing the smiles on our people; even the dying ones smile. And Sister said, "This is the way it is nearly every day. They are expecting, they are hoping that a son or daughter will come to visit them. They are hurt because they are forgotten."

Love begins at home

See, this neglect to love brings spiritual poverty. Maybe in our own family we have somebody who is feeling lonely, who is feeling sick, who is feeling worried. Are we there? Are we willing to give until it hurts in order to be with our families? Or do we put our own interest first? These are the questions we must ask ourselves, especially as we begin this year of the family. We must remember that love begins at home, and we must also remember that "the future of humanity passes through the family."

I was surprised in the West to see so many young boys and girls given to drugs. And I tried to find out why. Why is it like that, when those in the West have so many more things than those in the East? And the answer was, "Because there is no one in the family to receive them." Our children depend on us for everything—their health, their nutrition, their security, their coming to know and love God. For all of this, they look to us with trust, hope, and expectation. But often father and mother are so busy they have no time for their children, or perhaps they are not even married or have given up on their marriage. So the children go to the streets and get involved in drugs or other things. We are talking of love of the child, which is where love and peace must begin. These are the things that break peace.

But I feel that the greatest destroyer of peace today is abortion, because it is a war against the child, a direct killing of the innocent child, murder by the mother herself. And if we accept that a mother can kill even her own child, how can we tell other people not to kill one another? How do we persuade a woman not to have an abortion? As always, we must persuade her with love. And we remind ourselves that love means to be willing to give until it hurts. Jesus gave even His life to love us. So the mother who is thinking of abortion should be helped to love, that is, to give until it hurts her plans or her free time to respect the life of her child. The father of that child, whoever he is, must also give until it hurts.

By abortion, the mother does not learn to love, but kills even her own child to solve her problems. And by abortion, the father is told that he does not have to take any responsibility at all for the child he has brought into the world. That father is likely to put other women into the same trouble. So abortion just leads to more abortion. Any country that accepts abortion is not teaching its people to love, but to use any violence to get what they want. This is why the greatest destroyer of love and peace is abortion.

Many people are very, very concerned with the children of India, with the children of Africa, where quite a few die of hunger, and so on. Many people are also concerned about all the violence in this great country of the United States. These concerns are very good. But often these same people are not concerned with the millions who are being killed by the deliberate decision of their own mothers. And this is what is the greatest destroyer of peace today—abortion, which brings people to such blindness.

Bring the child back

And for this I appeal in India and I appeal everywhere, "Let us bring the child back." The child is God's gift to the family. Each child is created in the special image and likeness of God for greater things—to love and to be loved. In this year of the family, we must bring the child back to the center of our care and concern. This is the only way that our world can survive, because our children are the only hope for the future. As older people are called to God, only their children can take their places.

But what does God say to us? He says, "Even if a mother could forget her child, I will not forget you. I have carved you in the palm of my hand." We are carved in the palm of His hand; that unborn child has been carved in the hand of God from conception and is called by God to love and to be loved, not only now in this life, but forever. God can never forget us.

Fighting abortion by adoption

I will tell you something beautiful. We are fighting abortion by adoption—by care of the mother and adoption for her baby. We have saved thousands of lives. We have sent word to the clinics, to the hospitals and police stations: "Please don't destroy the child; we will take the child." So we always have someone tell the mothers in trouble: "Come, we will take care of you; we will get a home for your child." And we have a tremendous demand from couples who cannot have a child. But I never give a child to a couple who has done something not to have a child. Jesus said, "Anyone who receives a child in my name, receives me." By adopting a child, these couples receive Jesus, but by aborting a child, a couple refuses to receive Jesus.

Please don't kill the child. I want the child. Please give me the child. I am willing to accept any child who would be aborted and to give that child to a married couple who will love the child and be loved by the child. From our children's home in Calcutta alone, we have saved over 3,000 children from abortion. These children have brought such love and joy to their adopting parents and have grown up so full of love and joy!

I know that couples have to plan their family and for that there is natural family planning. The way to plan the family is natural family planning, not contraception. In destroying the power of giving life through contraception, a husband or wife is doing something to self. This turns the attention to self, and so it destroys the gift of love in him or her. In loving, the husband and wife must turn the attention to each other, as happens in natural family planning, and not to self, as happens in contraception. Once that living love is destroyed by contraception, abortion follows very easily.

(continued on next page)

"There is something you and I can always do. We can keep the joy of loving Jesus in our hearts and share that joy with all with whom we come into contact."

I also know that there are great problems in the world, that many spouses do not love each other enough to practice natural family planning. We cannot solve all the problems in the world, but let us never bring in the worst problem of all, and that is to destroy love. And this is what happens when we tell people to practice contraception and abortion.

Let us learn from the poor

The poor are very great people. They can teach us so many beautiful things. Once one of them came to thank us for teaching her natural family planning. She said, "You people who have practiced chastity, you are the best people to teach us natural family planning because it is nothing more than self-control out of love for each other." And what this poor person said is very true. These poor people may have nothing to eat, maybe they do not have a home to live in, but they can still be great people when they are spiritually rich.

When I pick up a hungry person from the street, I give him a plate of rice, a piece of bread. But a person who is shut out, who feels unwanted, unloved, terrified, the person who has been thrown out of society—that spiritual poverty is much harder to overcome. And abortion, which often follows from contraception, brings a people to be spiritually poor, and that is the worst poverty and the most difficult to overcome.

Those who are materially poor can be very wonderful people. One evening we went out and we picked up four people from the street. One of them was in a most terrible condition. I told the Sisters: "You take care of the other three; I will take care of the one who looks worse." So I did for her all that my love can do. I put her in bed, and there was such a beautiful smile on her face. She took hold of my hand as she said one word only—"Thank you"—and she died.

I could not help but examine my conscience before her. I asked, "What would I say if I were in her place?" My answer was very simple. I would have tried to draw a little attention to myself. I would have said, "I am hungry, I am dying, I am cold, I am in pain," or something. But she gave me much more—she gave me her grateful love. And she died with a smile on her face.

Then there was the man we picked up from the drain, half eaten by worms. After we had brought him to the home, he only said, "I have lived like an animal in the street, but I am going to die as an angel, loved and cared for." Then, after we had removed all the worms from his body, all he said, with a big smile, was, "Sister, I am going home to God," and he died. It was so wonderful to see the greatness of that man who could speak like that—without blaming anybody, without comparing anything. Like an angel—this is the greatness of people who are spiritually rich even when they are materially poor.

We are not social workers. We may be doing social work in the eyes of some people, but we must be contemplatives in the heart of the world. For we must bring that presence of God into your family, for the family that prays together stays together. There is so much hatred, so much misery; and we with our prayer, with our sacrifice, are beginning at home. Love begins at home. It is not how much we do, but how much love we put into what we do.

If we are contemplatives in the heart of the world with all its problems, these problems can never discourage us. We must always remember what God tells us in Scripture: "Even if a mother could forget the child in her womb [something impossible, but even if she could forget], I will never forget you."

Find the poor in your own home

So here I am talking with you. I want you to find the poor here, right in your own home first. Begin love there. Bring that good news to your own people first. And find out about your next-door neighbors. Do you know who they are?

I had the most extraordinary experience of love of neighbor with a Hindu family. A gentleman came to our house and said, "Mother Teresa, there is a family who have not eaten for so long. Do something." So I took some rice and went there immediately. And I saw the children—their eyes shining with hunger. I don't know if you have ever seen hunger, but I have seen it very often. And the mother of the family took the rice I gave her and went out. When she came back, I asked her, "Where did you go? What did you do?"

She gave me a very simple answer: "They are hungry also." What struck me was that she knew. And who are *they*? A Muslim family! And she knew. I didn't bring any more rice that evening because I wanted them, Hindus and Muslims, to enjoy the joy of sharing.

But there were those children, radiating joy, sharing the joy and peace with their mother because she had the love to give until it hurts. You see, this is where love begins—at home in the family.

Give out love with joy

So as the example of this family shows, God will never forget us. And there is something you and I can always do. We can keep the joy of loving Jesus in our hearts and share that joy with all with whom we come into contact. Let us make that one point—that no child will be unwanted, unloved, uncared-for or killed and thrown away. And give until it hurts—with a smile.

Because I talk so much of giving with a smile, a professor from the United States once asked me, "Are you married?" I said, "Yes, and I find it sometimes very difficult to smile at my spouse, Jesus, because He can be very demanding—sometimes." This is really something true. And this is where love comes in—when it is demanding, and yet we can give it with joy.

One of the most demanding things for me is traveling everywhere and with publicity. I have said to Jesus that if I don't go to heaven for anything else, I will be going to heaven for all the traveling with all the publicity, because it has purified me and sacrificed me and made me really ready to go to heaven.

If we remember that God loves us and that we can love others as He loves us, then America can become a sign of peace for the world. From here, a sign of care for the weakest of the weak—the unborn child—must go out to the world. If you become a burning light of justice and peace in the world, then really you will be true to what the founders of this country stood for. God bless you! [⇧]

A Leap of Faith

By Scott Robertson

ON APRIL 16, 1986, at about 12:15 in the afternoon, led by a friend, I put my trust in Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. Looking back on the past eight years, I have had my ups and downs as a Christian. I have also seen the Lord bring me through different steps of spiritual maturity. One of the more recent steps was more like a leap of faith. I would like to share that experience.

In July 1991 my wife and I decided we were going to tithe—that is, we determined that we were going to give ten percent of our income to the Lord. When we made this decision, we were finding it difficult (but not impossible) to pay our regular monthly bills. We knew, however, that if we gave to the Lord first, He would pour out blessings on us. So that's exactly what we decided to do—give the Lord His ten percent first—although looking at our finances on paper, we weren't sure how we were going to do it.

In October 1991, blessings were not exactly what we were receiving, or so we thought. Due to a slowing economy, the small company I work for laid off some of its employees. Those of us who were left, as thankful as we were to have our jobs, had to take pay cuts. I was hit with a ten percent cut in pay. My wife, who was five months pregnant with our second child, was getting ready to quit her baby-sitting job in December to stay at home with our children.



Scott Robertson with his wife Stacy and their two sons, Scotty (r.) and Matthew. Scott and Stacy are members of the Linwood, Md., Brethren Church, where Scott serves as vice moderator, teacher of an adult Sunday school class, and is on the church's Passing On the Promise Self-Study Committee.

In November 1991 the cost of our health insurance went up, and in December our landlords informed us that our rent would be increased by fifty dollars effective in January. All of this plus the fact that we knew we would have hospital bills to pay when our child was born.

We certainly did not feel blessed. It seemed as though the longer we tithed, the worse things got. We continued to stay faithful, however, holding on to God's promise in Malachi 3:8–12 that if we bring Him our tithes, He will throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out His blessing upon us. Even so, our financial situation continued to grow tighter.

An unexpected blessing

In May 1992 the company I work for announced that it was instituting an incentive program for employees in my position. Beginning in August, we would be paid over and above our regular weekly salary on the basis of the amount of work we produced.

When I first heard about this, it didn't register with me that this was the blessing for which we had been so patiently waiting. But that's exactly what it turned out to be. Within the first two months of this incentive program, all of the doctor and hospital bills from our son's birth were paid. In the months that followed, my wife, children, and I were able to take a much-needed and long-overdue vacation. We managed to get ten months ahead on our car payments and were able to save enough money for a down payment on a house.

I believe the Lord brings good out of every bad situation. Yes, we struggled financially when we first decided to tithe, but the blessings that finally came far outweighed the struggles. The Lord is faithful to those who are faithful. He never let us down.

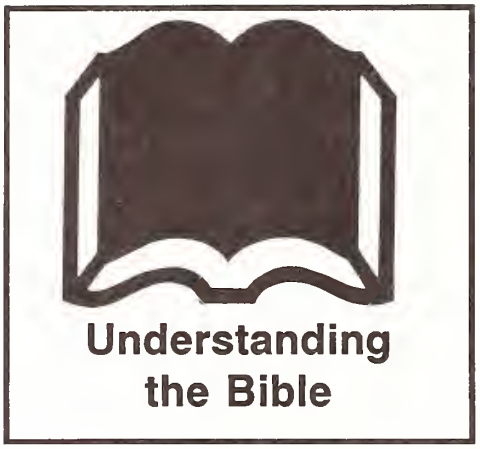
Tithing is about faith

In retrospect, I believe I know what tithing is all about. It isn't about money; it is about faith. It is having the faith to say, "I trust you, Lord. If I am obedient to you, I can't possibly go wrong." Do you have that kind of faith? If you have enough faith to trust Jesus as Lord of your life and Savior of your soul, then the faith to tithe should come easier. I guess the lesson in all of this is to have faith, whether it is for salvation, tithing, healing, answers to prayers, or whatever. Trust God in all things and have faith that He will provide.

In December 1993 my wife and I decided to go beyond our ten percent and give the Lord even more. In making this decision, we now have a mortgage that is more than double the rent we used to pay. It seems we are once again struggling somewhat financially. Then a few weeks after making this decision, I learned that the company I work for is putting some stipulations on the incentive program, making it a little more difficult to earn as much extra money as I was getting before. So our bills are piling up and things are starting to get tight again.

We're not relying on my incentive bonuses, because they could be gone in a second. Rather, we are counting on the Lord and His faithfulness. He poured out blessings once before when things got tight, and when He did so we increased our giving. He most certainly will pour out His blessings again. In fact, I'm sure He will. Until then, we well be patient and have faith.

The whole Christian experience is based on faith. If you don't know what the Christian experience is like, you can start by having faith in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. That's where it started for me eight years ago. Let's remember that faith doesn't do much good unless we act on it. Let's also remember the words of the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:7—"We live by faith, not by sight" (*NIV*). [✝]



Understanding the Bible

Historic Brethren Slogans About the Bible

First of Three Parts

By Dale R. Stoffer

HAVE YOU EVER HEARD the sayings, "The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible"; "No creed but the New Testament"; "In essentials unity, in nonessentials liberty, in all things charity"? If you became involved in The Brethren Church during the last 20 or 30 years, you may never have heard these slogans. But if your ties to the Brethren predate 1960, you are probably familiar with them.

For approximately 100 years, these slogans have served as summaries of certain basic Brethren beliefs, especially related to the authority and interpretation of Scripture. They also have been a means of drawing people into the church.

An outreach function

This outreach function was reinforced for me recently by my Sunday school teacher, Tony Lieb, who became active in the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church only a few years ago. He related that he and his family were church shopping several years ago and decided to begin with Park Street Brethren.

During their visit, he learned that the motto of The Brethren Church is "The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible." He decided that if this church truly believed and practiced this commitment, then he really didn't need to look anywhere else. In fact, because of the favorable impression this slogan made upon him and his family, they didn't even visit any other churches.

In the second article in this series, I will discuss further the significance this slogan has had for the Brethren. But I want to begin this series with a look at another slogan that has been important in the life of The Brethren Church.

Dr. Stoffer is assistant professor of historical theology at Ashland Theological Seminary. He serves on The Brethren Church's Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication, which is preparing this series of articles.

"No Creed but the New Testament"

The oldest of the slogans used by the Brethren is "No creed but the New Testament," or as it sometimes appears, "The New Testament is our only creed." One of the earliest appearances of this concept is in an account written about 1765 by a Quaker writer, Samuel Smith. Smith observed that the Brethren chose the New Testament for their rule or canon and that they had no other articles of faith than those contained in the New Testament.[1]

An early Brethren use of the concept occurs in the congregational records of the Philadelphia church. In 1817 that congregation affirmed that it had "no other confession of faith than the New Testament."[2]

This slogan was prominent in the writings of the Progressive Brethren (the forerunners of The Brethren Church) both before and after the division with the German Baptist Brethren that resulted in the formation of The Brethren Church in the early 1880s. In 1866 Henry Holsinger, the leading figure among the Progressives, declared regarding the Brethren in general that "the New Testament shall be our only Creed and Discipline."[3]

In the "Articles of Incorporation of The Brethren Church," dated August 25, 1883, appears the declaration that the Brethren do not seek "to set up or establish any creed but the New Testament." J. Allen Miller, a highly respected interpreter of Brethren thought, wrote an entire article in 1910 entitled "The New Testament: An All-Sufficient Creed."[4]

This slogan would have been accepted by all branches of the Brethren. Depending on how it was phrased, it could have different shades of meaning. As "no creed but the New Testament," it affirmed the Brethren position that we must avoid all man-made creeds and confessions of faith that would dictate how we are to understand Scripture. Any such human attempt to develop a binding credal statement would end up adding to or subtracting from God's revelation in the New Testament.

Likewise, creeds place blinders on our spiritual eyes, allowing us to see in Scripture only what the creeds say. Thus the Holy Spirit is limited in His role of bringing us new and deeper insights about Scripture.

Our final rule for faith and practice

When the Brethren declared, "The New Testament is our only creed," the emphasis fell on the conviction that the New Testament is an entirely sufficient declaration of Christian belief. Because it is the fullest disclosure of God's redemptive will for us in Jesus Christ, no authority is superior to the New Testament for determining our faith and practice. It is our final rule for faith and life. The Brethren could sometimes declare that *Scripture* was their rule for faith and practice, but their understanding that Jesus Christ is God's fullest revelation of Himself led them more generally to affirm the *New Testament* as the final rule.

This slogan, then, has been used in its negative formulation to reject all binding creeds as human products and in its positive formulation to affirm the all-sufficiency of the New Testament for governing our faith and life.

Does this slogan still have relevance

(continued on page 11)

[1]Donald F. Durnbaugh, ed., *The Brethren in Colonial America* (Elgin: The Brethren Press, 1967), pp. 16, 17.

[2]Roger E. Sappington, ed., *The Brethren in the New Nation* (Elgin: The Brethren Press, 1976), p. 241.

[3]Henry R. Holsinger, "Religious Dialogue," *Christian Family Companion*, 2 (February 20, 1866), 52.

[4]J. Allen Miller, "The New Testament: An All-Sufficient Creed," THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST, 32 (June 15, 1910), pp. 6–7.

The Woman's Outlook Newsletter

A publication of the Brethren Woman's Missionary Society

March–April 1994 Volume 7, Number 4

The President's Pen

Dear Ladies,

It's winter in Ohio and we are experiencing some very cold weather. Salt is being used on the icy roads and sidewalks. That reminded me that I had a small devotional book that was given to me several years ago. It is entitled *Salt in My Kitchen,* by Jeanette Lockerbie. One of the devotions talks of various uses for salt. One is to cleanse. II Kings 2:20–22 tells of the Prophet Elisha using salt to *cleanse* the waters. The custom of bathing newborn babies with salt was practiced by the Israelites (Ezekiel 16:4) and is practiced in some parts of the world today.

Our Bible calls Christians the "salt of the earth" and warns against losing our 'savour' that *seasons* the world. Colossians 4:6 says, *Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer every one.* Do we allow this spiritual salt to season our conversation and our testimony?

Salt *de-ices.* The "salt" of kindness and peace can melt the ice-bound heart as salt melts the ice on the sidewalks and on the roads in winter. There are many people just waiting for a word of kindness. Can you think of a better place to sprinkle this "salt" than in your own kitchen? Invite a friend in for coffee and some visiting.

My letter this month is short. I have had pink eye and the flu, and they have left me with no energy and little time. I trust you are all encouraged by the devotions in our program booklet. God bless you, and remember to "sprinkle some salt" in your conversations.

The officers are phoning and corresponding, and will meet again in May to confirm plans for the WMS Conference. I ask for your prayers, so we may know God's plan.

Blessings to each of you,

Shirley Black

Shirley Black

The Goal of the Witness

Devotions given by Charlene Rowser August 5, 1993, at the WMS Conference

How does one write about so great a topic as witnessing in three short segments of time? Volumes have already been written on the subject, and I would suspect the subject has never been or never will be exhausted! I have had a real struggle trying to come up with great words of wisdom to conclude the devotions for conference.

Somehow one word keeps coming back to me time and time again, until it becomes a haunting note—perhaps even a discord that jars us from our euphoria, our concentration on the melodies, the harmonies of life. That word has only four letters and is spelled l-o-s-t. It's a recurring theme in scripture and it should be a recurring theme in our Christian lives as we consider that, without our witness, the witness of all Christians, the world is *lost.* Today we need to consider the goal of the witness, reaching the lost.

In the fifteenth chapter of Luke, there are three beautiful parables shared by Jesus in response to the criticism of the Pharisees and the scribes that He, Jesus, was inviting sinners, of all people, to eat a meal with Him. Each of these illustrates God's love and concern for the lost. It's a good thing that Jesus did reach out to sinners, otherwise not one of us would ever be saved and go to heaven when we die.

The key to the entire chapter is found in two words, lost and found.

In every one something is lost—a person, an animal, or an object—and each needs to be found. You know them well—the parable of the Shepherd seeking for a lost sheep, a woman searching for a lost coin, and a father suffering for a lost son.

We have time to consider only one parable today and, even though it is most familiar, it can teach us profound lessons.

Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and lose one of them. Does he not leave the ninety and nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbours together and says, "Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep." I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninty-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent. Luke 15:4–7

The first lesson we learn is the condition of the sheep (or sinner). There are many references in both the Old and the New Testaments comparing people who are lost with sheep. In this story the shepherd had 100 sheep, but one was lost.

It's not very flattering or complimentary when the Bible compares us to sheep, but it is a graphic description of what we are. What do you know about sheep? They're dumb. Man has been able to train all kinds of animals—dogs, cats, lions, tigers, elephants, and even pigs, but I doubt if you've ever seen a sheep who was trained to jump through a hoop or dance on its hind legs wearing a tutu! It's not smart enough to be trained.

I recently saw a TV reporter interviewing some 4-H members who raise sheep and who were exhibiting them at the Elkhart County Fair. The reporter asked the boys whether their sheep were smart and the boys grinned and replied, "They're pretty dumb." People are the same way — they can be very intelligent and hold numerous degrees, but be spiritually illiterate. They may know many facts, but cannot answer questions about what truly matters in life.

Sheep are also wanderers. They never intend to get lost, but they nibble a bit here and a bit there and before long they are away from the flock.

(continued on page 2)

District Doings

From the **Central District**, Linda Johnson reported on the fall retreat, which was held October 15–16 at beautiful Camp Emmaus. Approximately 20 attended. The theme was "From Brokenness to Wholeness." Sandy Girdler, founder of Love Unlimited Ministries from Decatur, Illinois, was the main speaker. Saturday afternoon workshops were conducted by Verna Shaner and Dee Gruhn, both of whom are from Lanark. The retreat was a wonderful experience in which we all learned how God can take our brokenness and make us whole again. We shared from our hearts, cried, prayed, and laughed together.

The planning committee ladies were: Linda Johnson — chairman; Melva Staples — food and programs; Patti Klopping — games and decorations; Pam Boughton — decorations and name tags; Diana Meador and Karen Bushman — registration and crafts; Kris Hardacre — morning devotions; Elizabeth Garrett — worship and all-night prayer vigil; Merna Edwards, Gini Hutchison, and Sue Poffenberger — table hostesses.

The **Milledgeville Brethren Beacons** and **Priscilla Circle** ladies made cloth books for the small children to use during church. The "quiet books" are filled with zippers, velcro, buttons, plus surprises (a lady bug opens and little bugs are inside). In addition, each member of the Beacons Circle received $1 with the request to make the dollar grow for the treasury. (Those results will be interesting to read.)

The **Lanark Friendship** Society made daily "Little Lifters." They are similar to the commercial kind, but have a variety of Scriptures, humorous thoughts, and mind teasers. I was glad to receive one as a gift. This was a big and fun project.

From **Mexico, Indiana**, Jennifer Keyes reported their society held a chicken barbeque and bake sale in September with proceeds for the church improvement fund. They sell Kroger gift certificates for an on-going project. Their funds are designated for new hymnals, carpeting and/or repairs to the bell tower.

The **Huntington, Indiana**, ladies shared a carry-in salad bar at their December meeting, hosted by Dianna Gurtner. In addition to the article in the *Devotional Guide*, they began the book *The Bible's Legacy for Womanhood* by Edith Deen. This is a study of women of the Bible and their God-given legacies. Roxie Stahl leads the study each month

The Goal of the Witness *(continued from page 1)*

When we visited Jerusalem several years ago, our hotel was at the very edge of the city, and behind the hotel were fields marked off by stone fences. Every morning the boys would lead the flocks of sheep to the pasture. It was interesting to watch what went on. The boys spent their time engaged in playing soccer, while the sheep grazed on the grass. Many of the flock stayed close by, but you could always see the wanderers who "did their own thing." Sheep may also be lost because they follow after other sheep with no regard as to where they are going.

This is a picture of people today; they don't intend to get lost, but they just nibble on the things of the world, or they follow other people and the wrong standards until they are lost.

Then, too, a sheep is defenseless. It is not equipped to fight or even to flee from its attackers. It is easy to see how the sheep in our story got lost.

Next we see the compassion of the Shepherd. Our parable tells us that the Shepherd, although ninety-nine of the sheep came home, left them and went in search of the one that was lost. Why should it be such a big deal if one sheep out of a hundred is lost? The point of the parable is not the value of the sheep, but the love of the Shepherd.

Jesus didn't leave heaven 2,000 years ago to come to this world in order to save the sinner because of the value of the sinner. Look at the world today. People are arrogant, ugly, selfish, despicable, hard to deal with, hateful, and many more descripters we can all come up with. From a human point of view, not *one* of us is valuable enough to be saved. It was the love of Jesus Christ—the Good Shepherd—that caused Him to enter this sin-sick world.

The Shepherd was more concerned about one sheep than about the ninety-nine. We're the opposite. More of our energy is spent in caring for those already in the flock than for the one lost person so desperately in need of a witness.

So the Shepherd left the ninety-nine and went out searching for the one lost lamb. He stayed at his task until He found it. Are we willing to spend our time—whether it be hours, months, or even years—searching for that one lost soul? How long did Jesus look for you?

In our parable we discover that at long last the Shepherd found that one lost lamb, and He lifted it tenderly and placed it on His broad shoulders and carried it home. Oh, how great the compassion of the Shepherd!

Once home, what does the Shepherd do? He calls his neighbors and friends to celebrate with Him that the lost has been found. When the good news was received that the Shepherd had found the sheep, the whole village joined in the celebration.

That should happen at church, too. We share concern when we know someone is lost, and we may ask our friends or our Sunday school class to join us in praying for that one soul. The whole body becomes concerned, and there is praying and weeping because they care. Then through the witness—the seeking of someone—God works a miracle and the lost is found. What rejoicing there is! Jesus said there is more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

We have looked at the power of the witness (the Holy Spirit), the song of the witness, and now at the goal of the witness—seeking the lost. Where does that bring us? Right back to the first chapter of Acts. Keeping in mind verses 6–8, let's see what transpired after Jesus promised the disciples power for their witnessing. After He said this, He was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid Him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as He was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. *Men of Galilee*, they said, *why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.* Acts 1:9–11

Jesus said He was going away and if He went away He would come again. We had better believe it! We do not know when that will be, but it will happen—we accept that by faith.

(continued on page 4)

THE WOMAN'S OUTLOOK NEWSLETTER

Published bimonthly in January, March, May, July, September, and November by the Woman's Missionary Society of The Brethren Church.

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HERE'S AN IDEA!

The Public Service at the **Bethlehem, Virginia,** church was a slide presentation by Linda and Edna Logan entitled "Footsteps of Jesus, A Program of Scripture and Pictures." Those ladies had visited Israel, so took the congregation through Jesus' life with slides coordinated with appropriate Scriptures.

Laura Mae Riffle sent this report of the Sunday evening worship service sponsored by the **Ashland WMS** ladies. Since the offering is designated for Ashland Theological Seminary, people from the seminary presented the service.

Dr. and Mrs. Ron Sprunger played their arrangements of hymns for the organ and piano prelude, and JoAnn Seaman gave an overview of what WMS is and does. Karen Weidenhamer gave the devotions and led the group in prayer. She introduced Dr. Fred Finks, president of the seminary, who presided. Dr. Sprunger, professor of music at the seminary, led a sextet of seminary students in singing several numbers during the evening. Mrs. Sprunger accompanied.

Dr. Finks gave highlights of the seminary; Ashland Theological Seminary is the largest seminary in Ohio, and off-campus teaching sites are in Cleveland, Columbus, and Detroit. The student body is composed of members from 60 denominations who share the commonality of Jesus Christ. Thirty-one percent of the students are female. Dr. Finks said that the seminary trains those called from ordinary life to extraordinary service.

Two students spoke of their experiences: Errol and his wife, Vicki, feel equipped and empowered to return to South Africa following his May graduation. Anton, a first-year student from Moscow, Russia, said, "God changed my mind and my heart, as I read the Scriptures. Jesus Christ opened Himself to me." His goal is to return to Russia to establish a Christian school.

DiAnne Ewing was the public service speaker in **Tucson** in November. She is the Tucson coordinator for Concerned Women of America, and she emphasized our responsibility to vote according to biblical standards and to work to uphold family values.

Think Spring!

The spring season is a joyous time — giving thanks for the new birth in nature and celebrating the Lord's Resurrection! ALLELUIA!

But first comes March —

An Old Irish Blessing

May the road
rise up to meet you,
May the wind
be always at your back,
May the sun shine warm
upon your face
And rains fall soft
upon your fields.
And, until we meet again,
May God hold you
in the hollow of His hand.

Missionary Miscellany

The missionaries for **March** are those in the Missionary Board office, those who "take care of" our missionaries: Jim Black, the executive director; Juan Miranda, director of Latin American Ministries; Stan Gentle, assistant to the executive director, and Ginny Hoyt, the office manager. Their responsibilities are numerous and include travel, correspondence, finances, supervision and plans, and a whole lot more! Pray earnestly for them.

The **April** missionaries are Ken and Carolyn Solomon, completing their first term together in Medellín, Colombia, South America. Continue to pray for their safety in that drug-infected city, and also for their good health. We are thankful for them.

Three home missions pastors are the **May** missionaries: Jim and Ann Miller in Carmel, Indiana; Todd and Princene Bonnett in the Mansfield, Ohio, Walcrest Brethren Church; and Charles and Linda Beekley in Frederick, Maryland. Their commonality is pastoring home mission churches. The Carmel Church is off Indiana District mission board support; Todd is a seminary student as well as the pastor; and the Mountainview Church in Frederick is relatively new. Give special prayer for Linda, recovering from two back surgeries last summer. Your prayers, encouragement notes, and thoughts are appreciated by every one.

You will remember that Bill and Sharon Winter, former missionaries in Argentina, have relocated to Colorado, wanting to be Tentmakers at a new Brethren church. Their new address is: 11957 Keough Drive, Northglenn, CO 80233-1223. Bill works in a computer store, and Sharon is employed at a language development pre-school for special needs children. Keep them on your prayer list, too.

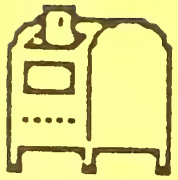
Ginny Hoyt submitted this **overseas mailing information** for your care packages:

It is best to use mailers instead of boxes. Unless a box is absolutely necessary, use a mailer. The items get there quicker, the missionaries usually will not have to pay duty on a mailer, and it will usually be delivered to them. Boxes are held at the post office and the missionaries are notified to come and pick them up. Sometimes the missionaries have to pay a large amount of duty to receive a box.

The missionaries are most grateful for being remembered by the supportive Brethren at home. And this information is provided because a common question at the Mission Board Office is how to mail overseas.

If your society is interested in sending a care package to any of the missionaries, please contact Ginny Hoyt (419-289-1708) for suggestions. For instance, Carolyn Solomon has requested old Sunday school papers with pictures for children to cut out or color. The Eagles and Ruggles in Mexico City have requested certain books. In addition, Tracy Ruggles and Jan Eagle are interested in craft items and materials. Ginny has more suggestions for you. Some are suitable for Bible school projects, too.





Ann DeVeny wrote from Germany that their children (Andy and Angie with her husband and baby) were with them for Christmas. What a blessing!

Dan and Ann are completing their three-year term overseas and expect a reassignment this summer to the States. Even so, they anticipate many opportunities to see the Lord at work in their remaining six months overseas. Dan's chaplaincy duties are varied and numerous: stress-related, marital, and the need for spiritual studies among the men. Ann leads women's Bible studies, and she and Dan will speak at a sweetheart banquet in February.

They will join Club Beyond, the Military Community Youth Ministries, in a ten-day experience of missionary work in Romania. Aubrey is a member of this youth group, and she wrote of their plans: "I will be going to Dezna, Romania, April 1–10 to work at a hospital for handicapped orphans." She explained that at the hospital, in intense three-week sessions, parents or a family member are trained to give therapy to the handicapped children when they return home. This is the only hospital of its kind, and there are approximately 150,000 handicapped children in Romania.

The Club Beyond youth will renovate storage space into a much-needed classroom and sleeping space, build a play area and equip it with playground equipment, and conduct "mini-Bible Clubs" for the kids. Aubrey requests our prayers as Club Beyond spreads the message of Jesus Christ in Romania. Prayers are needed as they plan and prepare, then in their work and association with the kids, and as those who are helped give back to the helpers.

Ann and Dan anticipate packing to move in May or June. They will need your prayers, too.

Daniel Rosales wrote of their wonderful experiences in Villa Constitucion, Argentina, December 11–19, when Daniel conducted an outdoor evangelistic crusade. Remember, previously I wrote that Daniel and Kathy were taking their children for this crusade, back to Daniel's home town. The devil attacked them! Among his attempts to discourage them were these: one week before leaving, their car was hit. And Natalia, their youngest child, fell from her bed and broke her collar bone. Prayers sustained them and they arrived for the crusade two weeks before Christmas.

Approximately 200 people attended each night. During the services for the adults, the children were in their own meetings with ladies who shared the gospel at the children's level. The crusade was well publicized through radio, TV, and newspapers. God knows how many were reached through the media; 60 commitments were made in the meetings. First-time confessions of faith numbered 30 and 30 others returned to the Lord after having strayed.

Daniel was born in Villa Constitucion. It is noteworthy that he was invited to return after seven years to this city of 41,000 for the crusade. In addition to preaching in Villa Constitucion, Daniel preached in Soldini, Kathy's home town. (Remember, she is Ray and Marilyn Aspinall's daughter.)

Daniel gives all glory to God for allowing him to proclaim the gospel. To us, his "dear brothers and sisters," Daniel is grateful for our prayers, letters of encouragement and support. He requests continued prayers. He has invitations to conduct campaigns in Barcelona, Spain, and is seeking God's perfect and sovereign will.

The Goal of the Witness

(continued from page 2)

Many years ago, when our kids were about 3 and 4, we took them to a Christmas puppet show in the big Rike's store in downtown Dayton. They were allowed to go up front and sit on the floor, while we stood in the back and watched. When the show was over and we went to collect the kids, we found David immediately, but Tracy was nowhere in sight. There was a mob of kids and parents that day and, after searching for some time, Mom got panicky. I was about ready to inform some store personnel that we had lost our little girl, when I looked over in the corner and saw Tracy riding a hobby horse—unconcernedly. When I finally made my way over to her, I said something stupid like, "Honey, weren't you afraid you were lost." She looked at me right in the eye and said, "Mommy, I knew that, if I stayed here, you'd come and find me."

Can we look in the face of Jesus and say, "Lord, I don't know when you're coming back for me, but if I stay here, you'll find me." Will there be others with us, to whom we have witnessed, that He will find also?

The Editor's Ending

Dear Friend,

From the news items and letters in this issue, you see I have had interesting mail. I am grateful!

One correction is needed in the *Devotional Guide* for the April topic by Karen Little on page 26: Column 2 should conclude with this: ". . . can truly be accountable to God, and assume responsibility for every thought, word and deed—under the Lordship of Christ. Care to join me?"

We moved last summer, which meant getting into my closets. I remembered Jesus' words in Matthew 6: when you pray, enter into your closet (room), close the door, and pray. So, in my clothes closet, I asked the Lord to show me what stuff in my life could be discarded. Had I placed too much emphasis on possessions? Then, in the linen closet, I wondered about being irresponsible. Was I shirking my duties and not being useful, like those table cloths which don't fit our table? I had quite a job in the broom closet! I swept out hidden thoughts like cobwebs that should have been gone a long time ago.

I realized moving was good for me—this was a good time for personal inventory. And, moving was an answer to one of my long-time prayers.

This week, when I was reading 1 Peter, I found three B's which are important as we Pass On the Promise. Chapter 3:13–15 admonishes us to "be a follower of that which is good; . . . be not afraid; and . . . be ready always to give an answer." Those sound easy, and, with God's help, they will be.

Please remember to:

- write JoAnn Seaman if you have questions about the WMS finances and policies. She wrote an interesting explanation of the receipts, disbursements, and reserve accounts.
- send your quilt squares to Joan Merrill, the Sewing and World Relief Coordinator, by April 30, in preparation for the National Conference quilt project. The guidelines were in the January–February Newsletter.
- to buy Sisterhood of Mary and Martha books from Kathleen Mack, the literature secretary. A few are available at reduced prices.

Your friend,

Joan

Joan



Brethren World Missions:

My Praise and Concern

By James R. Black, Executive Director
Missionary Board of the Brethren Church

THERE ARE TIMES when I read of what other evangelical movements are doing, hear of the millions who have yet to hear the Gospel of Good News, wrestle with budgets and the constant need of promotion, and find myself bogged down with administrative duties and travel obligations. I'll admit to more than a small measure of frustration.

But then I hear some complimentary comment or comments about how much we Brethren are doing in world missions for such a small denomination, and I feel better. I even find my desire to "enjoy" my ministry returning

A widespread witness

I am encouraged when I reflect on the witness The Brethren Church is making in Mexico, Colombia, Peru, Paraguay, Argentina, India, Malaysia, and here in the U.S.A. But Brethren mission work is not limited to the witness in these countries and the work under the direct supervision of the Missionary Board. A number of Brethren congregations also have members who minister in other countries in various kinds of "missionary" activity, including many who are involved in what is called "short-term" mission work.

This is great! I've said it before, but I'm not ashamed to repeat my belief that "A congregation is a priority with God that has as its priority world missions."

It is wonderful to know that Christianity is rapidly spreading throughout the world in our time! Ralph Winter, writing in *Mission Frontiers*, says, "Across the centuries, Bible-believing Christians have become an even larger proportion of the world population. In 1430 AD only one in one hundred were Bible-believing Christians. Now one in ten are believers." That's satisfying news!

Much work remains

But there are still only 540 million Bible-believing Christians in a world with a population of more than 5.4 billion people. Much work remains for all of us.

I am convinced that The Brethren Church must become more involved in reaching those as yet unreached. Brethren congregations in countries outside of the United States must be more rapidly equipped to care for their own ministries in order that we can concentrate on moving into areas where the church has not yet been established. This may require some adjustments in Missionary Board policy. So be it.

We have made some progress in this area, especially in India. Rev. K. Prasanth Kumar, our Director of Brethren Mission in India, reports that last year the Brethren Mission was able to enter 38 never-before visited villages.



Rev. James R. Black

Developing "missionary" churches

In other countries where we have mission work, it is certainly necessary that we continue to assist in developing the local congregations, in the training of national leaders, and in the planting of new congregations. They, in turn, will become "missionary."

In Mexico, for instance, our objective is quite specific—to work with national leaders to plant churches in that country. Ministries of compassion are certainly Christ-taught and are therefore essential. But we must not let these prevent us from reaching out to that segment of the world, to those people groups, who are as yet unreached for Christ.

I once again thank Brethren people and our other friends for your tremendous support of Brethren missions. May our success only drive us on to greater things, as together we strive to bring about the fulfillment of the Great Commission in our day. [⇧]

Brethren Slogans

(continued from page 10)

for us today? Yes, for it continues to challenge us as Brethren not to give anything the same ultimate authority as Scripture. Credalism does not pose the danger today that it did in past eras, but we have modern authorities that can likewise divert our allegiance from Christ and His Word—such as Madison Avenue, which wants us to bow down to materialism; the government, which wants us to believe that it can cure all that ails our culture; technology, which promises us a blessed future. Let us retain the New Testament as our only creed. [⇧]





México:

Of Windmills, Vision, and Hope

By Tim Eagle
Brethren Missionary to México

IN THE MUSICAL *Man of La Mancha*, the main character, Don Miguel de Cervantes (played by Peter O'Toole), is asked why Don Quixote, the main character of his play, holds on to his insanity by seeing things in an unreal world. Cervantes reply is quite poignant, "To see the things in this world as they are and not as they should be, that is insanity!"

I'm sometimes amazed that we, in our modern Western mindset, so often look only at "the real world" and forget that we, as Christians, need to see the world "as it should be" or "as it should have been." The Lord desired (and desires) a different world. And He wants us to see the world "as it should be."

As missionaries, we are often accused of being like Don Quixote. We are accused of "attacking dragons" that are in reality only "windmills." We hear charges that we are doing the "unnecessary" or the "insane."

"How can you go to México? Aren't there enough needy people in the United States?"

"How can you bear to live in that polluted and dirty city? I would never think of doing that!"

"How in the world can two churches and two Bible studies impact a city of 25 million people? You all are crazy!"

"Why do you need to start new churches? Aren't there enough of them already?"

"How can you trust Méxicans? They are so unreliable and dishonest."

Maybe the questions were not stated quite this bluntly. But the implications were the same.

Scriptural "Don Quixotes"

We, ourselves, sometimes wonder if we are "only attacking the windmill" rather than the ferocious dragon. But then I look to scriptural examples of "Don Quixotes" for inspiration.

I think about Gideon. How in the world were he and his 300 men to defeat a Midianite host many times greater? Or what about David? How was this boastful young shepherd boy going to defeat a battle veteran and champion of the army of the Philistines?

And how was Jonah, a reluctant Quixote, to know that he would bring revival to the city of Nineveh? Or better yet, how could Jesus expect a handful of fishermen, ex-prostitutes, tax collectors, and other "dregs" of Jewish society to carry on the work of His kingdom?

We missionaries in México and the Brethren here with us do not consider our thinking to be "insane." We see it as vision—not a vision borne of despair or desperation, but one borne of hope. It is a scriptural vision, a vision from God. "For in this hope [of redemption] we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently" (Rom. 8:24–25, *NIV*).

As Todd and Tracy Ruggles go out with our young worker, Ramón Hernandez, to Jesús Del Monte, we see a new group of Christians being discipled and learning about the love of God. This is vision.

When Jan and I go to Prados del Rosario, a difficult middle-class area, with Pastor Castro to do ministry, I see a group of people who have forsaken their "religion" for a true faith in Christ. This is vision.

I see Pastor Calderon at Palo Solo, seeking to bring the gospel to many who do not want it, thinking it is just another "cult." I see the members of the Santa Teresa church recovering from difficulties last year and looking to see what kind of ministry they can do to share the gospel with their neighbors and friends. This is all vision! A vision of hope!

You have made it possible for us to experience this vision, this hope. But let us challenge you as well. Maybe it is time for all the Brethren to start seeing our world as it should be. Start attacking some "windmills." You may find out that they were really dragons after all. [✝]



A Thing Worth Doing

By Rev. David Kerner
Brethren Missionary to Colombia

"A THING WORTH DOING is worth doing badly!" Or at least that's what J. Stuart Briscoe says in *How to be a Motivated Christian* (p. 40). Believe it or not, that's exactly what we're trying to teach The Brethren Church of Colombia. Let me explain.

As a brotherhood, our goal in any mission field is to develop a self-governed and self-supported national church. Our task as missionaries is to develop leaders, disciple new believers, and establish a church that will one day no longer need either foreign missionaries or outside financial help.



Members of The Brethren Church of Colombia are trying out their spiritual gifts, assuming responsibility for their church, and learning that they can witness effectively to their nation.

Transferring responsibility

In Colombia we are in a continual process of shifting more and more responsibility to the Colombian Brethren. We train and encourage them to make decisions, to plan and direct worship services, to teach Sunday school classes, to organize evangelistic programs, and to begin using their own spiritual gifts to witness to their society in the power of Jesus' name.

It is always difficult to convince people to try something they have never done before. "But I'll make mistakes!" they cry. And that's when we have to say, "A thing **worth** doing is **worth** doing badly. Yes, you will make some mistakes, but if you believe this is something the Lord wants done, give it a try! Get started, and the Lord will help you grow. The first try may not be great, but you will improve."

Slowly, bit by bit, The Brethren Church of Colombia is growing and gaining maturity. The members are trying out their spiritual gifts, assuming responsibility, and learning that they can witness to their nation far more effectively than any foreign missionary ever could.

In the neighborhood congregation in Villa de Los Alpes (at the southeast edge of the modern metropolis of Bogotá) the members plan and lead all of the worship services and hold their own midweek prayer meetings. Recently two new families in the neighborhood opened their homes to the gospel through the daily witnessing of the church families. As a result, the members of this house-church have seen firsthand that the Lord has given them spiritual gifts, and that the Lord will help them use those gifts. They have grown in faith and in the conviction that the Lord Jesus lives and moves among them.

Much remains to be done

There is a great deal yet to be done before The Brethren Church of Colombia will be able to stand on its own. As a brotherhood, we will need to send financial support so that pastors can be trained and materials purchased and used. We need to support this struggling church with truly faithful prayer.

"In Colombia we are in a continual process of shifting more and more responsibility to the Colombian Brethren."

We will also need to contribute to the support of missionary families who will train leaders and provide guidance and encouragement as the national church develops. We will need to show the Brethren of Colombia, by our own example of love, sacrifice, faithfulness, and commitment, what it means to walk humbly with the Lord.

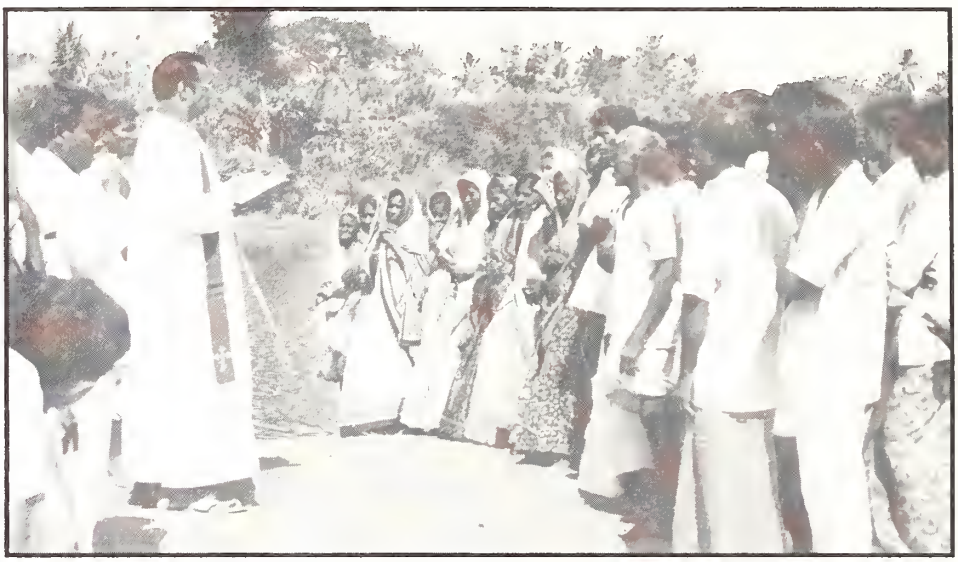
Much remains to be done in Colombia. We will continue to say, "A thing worth doing is worth doing badly . . . at least at first!" And as we do so, we will pray that our brothers will understand the Lord's assurance: "My strength is perfected in weakness." [✝]

Reaching People for Christ in India

By K. Prasanth Kumar
Director, Brethren Mission in India

THE PAST YEAR has been a very enjoyable, encouraging, and spiritually rewarding one for Nirmala and me. The Brethren Mission in India was able to reach many idol-worshipers through the effective means of evangelism, proclamation, and service. Since its beginning in 1970, the Brethren Mission in India has reaped a total of 3,427 baptized members. In addition to these, hundreds of other people regularly attend the churches.

The Brethren Annual Convention was held January 29–31, 1993, at Bondapalli. Approximately 1,200 people attended the revival meetings that were part of this convention. We praise God for the 34 men and 18 women who accepted the Lord and were baptized on the last day of the convention.



Rev. Kumar gives instructions for baptism to the 52 people who accepted the Lord during the Annual Convention and revival meetings held at Bondapalli village.

A spiritual harvest

Revival meetings were conducted in many villages throughout the year. The village pastors and their wives worked with Nirmala and me in this ministry by sharing the Gospel of Christ person to person in addition to the meetings. The Lord blessed these efforts, and as a result I was able to baptize seven people in Sankili, seven more in Narkedimilli, and eight in Gokavaram.

In March Rev. O.M. Prasad conducted a revival meeting at Rajahmundry, and on August 21 a great Christian singing and gospel meeting was held in a public auditorium that holds 1,100 people. What a rewarding spiritual time this was! Then on October 2, Rev. James R. Black was the revival speaker. His burden for the lost of India was evident in his spirit-reviving messages, which yielded much fruit.

A recently-completed church building was dedicated to the glory of God by Rev. Black on September 27. A prayer house was likewise dedicated in the Sankili village on September 30.

The youth have been a focal point of our ministry, as we see so much frustration, dejection, and desperation among them. When a young person accepts Jesus and is baptized, he is deprived of academic and job opportunities.

In order to strengthen the Christian young people, Brother Manohar, a Spirit-filled young man, was invited to hold a special youth meeting on February 20 at the Brethren church. The Lord touched many young lives and drew them to His saving knowledge. That same month, two other young servants of God, Mr. Madhu and Miss Jessie, reached out to the youth, uplifting and strengthening these young hearts.

The Vizag area Brethren Youth Conference was held October 2, at which time Rev. Black spoke to 150 young men and women. Rev. Black's message had an excellent impact on the hearts and lives of these young people. As a result of this and our continued efforts to reach the youth, 28 were baptized on October 3.

Because of the good teaching materials and cassettes received from Lakeland Child Evangelism and the Masontown Brethren Church, we were able to conduct a very successful vacation Bible school May 3–8. We realize that the children are the future of the church, so they are regularly taught the Bible and singing during weekly Sunday school. We also had a special Children's Rally in Vizag in March and one in Rajahmundry in August.

Reaching out to Hindu women

A continuing effort is being made by Nirmala and other lady evangelists to reach the Hindu women. The women are visited in their homes, where prayers are offered for their physical and spiritual healing. Special Women's Meetings were conducted in Vizag

Kokomo Church Continues to Minister Even Though Church Doors are Closed

Kokomo, Ind. — In the early 1960s, the Kokomo First Brethren Church had a vision to help the Kokomo area. The church was started with the assistance of Rev. Austin Gable. A little over 30 years later, the church has closed due to low attendance and a fire that totally demolished the inside of the building.

During the 30-year history of the church, it advanced from a part-time pastor to full-time, it purchased a parsonage, then went back to part-time pastors and sold the parsonage. The remaining members still felt there was a need for the church, but due to burnout, the members made a decision to close. The members are visiting churches in the area to decide where they would like to take their membership.

Through the death of this church, other programs may gain new life due to monetary amounts donated by the church. Money was given to charitable organizations in Kokomo, including the Rescue Mission, Youth for Christ, and Clinic of Hope. Some money was given to the Peru, Ind., First Brethren Church as a thank you for sharing with us two lay speakers, Amos Combs and Bill Carmichael, for several months. An amount of $50,000 was used to start a scholarship at Ashland Theological Seminary to encourage students to minister in the Indiana District. Money was also sent to the camp at Shipshewana, and the remaining money, approximately $40,000, will be given to the Indiana District.

The Kokomo First Brethren Church did not have many members, and the congregation struggled for the 30-plus years of its existence. But with its closing, many people will be helped, including the youth of the Kokomo area. This may not have been the vision for the church when it was started, but the church will live on for years to come because of its existence in the Kokomo area.

Thank you to all who helped us in any way during our ministry. We have fond memories of many of you who worshiped with us and helped us.

— Liz Surbey, Bunker Hill, Ind.

Training Session at Flora, Ind., Focuses on Ministry to Youth

Flora, Ind. — Twelve Flora First Brethren Church members attended a training session for youth leaders and teachers held January 6 at the Flora Church.

Sherry Bowling, a student at Ashland Theological Seminary and former Youth Ministry Associate for The Brethren Church, led the training session. She began the session by administering the Meyers-Briggs personality inventory, in order to help the participants to better understand how they relate to other people. She presented some sample training materials, then led the group in a brainstorming session to generate ideas of ways to impact the lives of young people. She also led a discussion of ways to encourage and support leaders involved in ministry.

The Flora congregation expresses its thanks to Ms. Bowling for leading this training session and to Deb Ritchey, Education/Leadership/Youth Administrative Assistant for The Brethren Church, for making it possible. The seminar, which spurred new ideas and renewed dedication for the youth program, was enjoyed by all those who participated. They wished they could have kept Sherry longer!



Sherry Bowling leads the training session at the Flora church.

Reaching People in India

and Rajahmundry in April and at Hyderabad in May. Rev. Black brought messages to the regular weekly women's meetings in Rajahmundry and Vizag during his administrative visit last fall, and he also gave an inspiring message at a meeting of the Brethren preachers' wives during that time.

Another activity of the Brethren Mission in India is publishing the monthly magazine *Suvarthikudu* ("Evangelist"), which contains articles that minister to the spiritual needs of families, women, and youth. We have also arranged for comforting Bible verses to be published daily in two regional newspapers.

The Lord has helped us buy a building for the girls' orphanage with funds provided by the National W.M.S. Now we are able to care for 30 poor boys and 15 poor girls in the Brethren Church's Home and to provide all of their spiritual and physical needs. Some of these children have gone on to become preachers and teachers.

We continue to minister to the less privileged people of our society. This year 30 women were given free sewing training and five of them took the government exam and received certificates. Now they are qualified to get jobs in government institutions. Sewing machines were given to four women, which will help them support themselves.

We were able to render free medical aid to approximately 150 poor and sick people every day at the Brethren Mission Hospital in Rajahmundry. We also visited many villages during the year with the mobile medical unit, where we gave free medical aid to the sick villagers deprived of medical facilities. One such trip was made September 26, during Rev. Black's visit.

During the year 1,600 food packets were distributed to undernourished children. Utensils and cotton blankets were also given to the poor. Bicycles were given to five men, helping them to support themselves.

A horrifying earthquake hit many villages near Bombay on September 30, 1993. I visited the village of Marathwada, which was devastated by the earthquake, while relief efforts were taking place. It was a heartaching experience to see the suffering and death caused by this disaster. Most of the people in this village were left homeless and starving. I was able to distribute money to help meet their needs.

Nirmala and I praise and thank the Lord for blessing all our endeavors to reach people for Christ, and we express our deep sense of gratitude and thanks to the Brethren for being such an important part of our ministry. [⇧]

Brethren Church National Office Announces Change in 1994 Summer Crusader Program

Ashland, Ohio — The Brethren Church National Office recently announced that no Summer Crusader teams will be sent out this summer.

The reason for this announcement is because only one person applied to be a Summer Crusader this year. Obviously, it is not possible to field a team with only one applicant.

Despite this announcement, there will be a Crusader program this summer. As many as nine young adults will serve as **Crusader Interns** during the summer months. Four of these have already been placed, and placement of the other five is under consideration.

In addition, three districts have indicated a desire to field **District Crusaders** this summer. District Crusader teams are comprised of high school students who have completed grades 10–12. They do several weeks of service in their own district. The District Crusader program was begun in 1990 and has been growing since that first year.

Because of the declining number of applications for Summer Crusading during the past several years, staff at The Brethren Church National Office had sensed a need to review and perhaps revamp the Summer Crusader team portion of the Crusader program. This review has begun, but no conclusions have yet been reached. Not having teams this summer will allow time for this review to be completed.

In a recent letter Ronald W. Waters, Director of Brethren Church Ministries, and Debra S. Ritchey, Administrative Assistant working in the areas of Education/Leadership/Youth for the National Office, made the following comments concerning the lack of Summer Crusader teams in 1994:

> Obviously, we have some disappointment about not having a Summer Crusader team this year. This would have been the 25th year since the program was reinstated in 1970. So for sentimental reasons it would have been nice to have teams this year. **But we firmly believe that when we offer summer ministry opportunities, they should be of the highest quality and beneficial to the young adults as well as for the church as a whole.** We are committed to find the best ways to help young people sense and respond to God's call on their lives. We are open to the leading of the Spirit as to what modifications and new directions the Crusader program should take in the future. We earnestly covet your prayers for us as we seek God's guidance. We will be soliciting concrete ideas and suggestions at a later date.

A special offering for the Crusader program will be received in May as in past years, even though no Summer Crusader teams will be sent out this year. The gifts received will be used to underwrite the administrative support for the Crusader Intern and District Crusader portions of the Crusader program. It will also be used to help cover the cost of administrative time invested in the study and review of the Crusader program and promotional costs of announcing the results of the study.

Berlin, Pa., Church Installs New Deacon and Deaconesses

Berlin, Pa. — Robert Brant was installed as a deacon and his wife Nancy as well as Shirley Landis and Jeanne Sprowls were installed as deaconesses January 23 at Berlin Brethren Church.

Rev. Bryan Karchner, pastor of the Berlin congregation, conducted the installation service, which was held during the morning worship service.

The four new members of the diaconate were elected by majority vote at the annual congregational business meeting on January 9. The congregation prepared for the election by reading 1 Timothy 3:8–13 on the three Sunday mornings prior to the congregational business meeting as well as immediately before the vote. The four will serve a three-year term in which to receive experience and training. At the end of that term, the congregation will again vote on them, and those who receive a two-third's majority vote will be ordained to the diaconate for life.

According to Doyle E. Paul, chair of the Berlin diaconate, "To serve as a member of the diaconate is a high and holy calling, never [to be] entered upon lightly, but always in the fear of God, looking to Jesus Christ as a pattern, and guided and empowered by the Holy Spirit working in the fellowship of the believing congregation. [Members of the] diaconate are to act as leaders in care-giving to both the pastor and the church members and friends. This care-giving places high priority on spiritual needs. Diaconate work is service to God, to the church, and to the pastor."

— reported by Doyle E. Paul



Berlin's new deacon Robert Brant (l.) and deaconesses (l. to r.) Nancy Brant, Shirley Landis, and Jeanne Sprowls, with Pastor Bryan Karchner.

Billy Graham Welcomed Warmly in North Korea

Minneapolis, Minn. — Evangelist Billy Graham announced recently that despite present tensions between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) and the United States, he was welcomed very cordially by the people and leaders of North Korea during his January 27–February 1 visit there.

Dr. Graham noted that his primary purpose in going to North Korea was to preach the gospel, but that one reason for going now was to express his concern for peace in the region and to make whatever contribution he could to better relations between our two nations. He said that one highlight of his visit was a three-hour meeting with President Kim Il Sung, who received him warmly.

Little Crusader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

Hi boys and girls!

Do you have a best friend? Do you enjoy going places, sharing things, and having fun with your best friend?

There were two boys in the Bible who were very best friends and who shared things with each other. Their names were David and Jonathan.

In 1 Samuel 18 it says that Jonathan loved David so much that he gave David his sword, his bow, and his belt. It is a great feeling to give someone you love something that has great value to you.

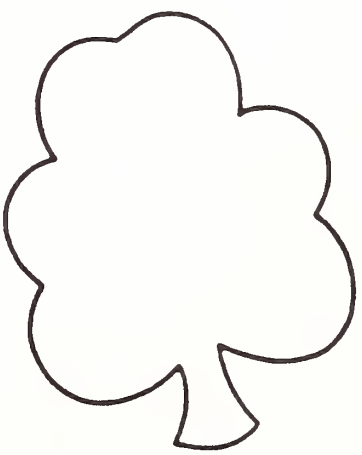
Unfortunately, David and Jonathan didn't get to spend very much time together. Jonathan's father, who was King Saul, wanted to kill David because he was jealous of David. Jonathan spent a great deal of time trying to protect David from the angry King Saul. He even risked his life to help David escape from the country. David told Jonathan that he would never forget him, and he promised always to show kindness to Jonathan and his family.

Are you thoughtful of your friends and loyal to them, just as David and Jonathan were to each other? If you have a best friend or friends, remember how these two boys treated each other. Then you will know how to treat your friends.

Look up the following verses in your Bible. (Ask your mother or dad to help you if you have difficulty finding them.) What does each verse say about friends?







Unscramble the following sentence.

nsdfire ear ndsfire rerfvoe.

_____ ___ _____ _____.

World Relief Helping California Church Coalition To Focus on Longer-Term Earthquake Response

Wheaton, Ill — World Relief of the National Association of Evangelicals is assisting United Christian Response, a coalition of churches in southern California, in providing trauma counseling, needs assessment, and volunteer crews for clean up and transportation to survivors of the earthquake.

At the request of the churches in the coalition, World Relief is providing expertise to organize the coalition and is giving guidance based on its 50 years of disaster-response experience.

A number of churches in the area in which the earthquake occurred established emergency shelters and provided food for victims immediately after the quake. But now churches are gearing up for a second phase of ministry. "Our goal in forming the coalition is to develop a long-term response to this massive crisis," said Terry Inman, pastor of North Hollywood Assembly of God Church. "We want to reach out to people from all backgrounds and cultures to show our concern and God's love in concrete ways."

"If God has not given us this moment to show our good works, then what will be that moment?" said Jack Hayford, pastor of The Church on the Way in Van Nuys, Calif., to some 40 pastors and church leaders who gathered to discuss plans. "God has broken down a wall of blocked communications between ethnic groups, believers and non-believers, and rich and poor. We now have an opportunity to start communicating among ourselves."

Hayford and Inman brought church leaders together for the coalition, an effort made easier by the fact that churches are already working together for an upcoming Luis Palau crusade in the San Fernando Valley in June.

"World Relief's goal in times of disasters is to help interested churches develop a strong and effective united response in their communities that will have long-lasting results," said Bas Vanderzalm, World Relief's international ministries director. "It's the relationships that church volunteers establish with disaster victims that will have the real impact. People experiencing churches caring for their needs will be more likely to respond to a crusade in June."

Brethren can support World Relief's church-based relief efforts in California by giving through their local churches or by sending contributions directly to The Brethren Church, 524 College Ave., Ashland, OH 44805. Please indicate that your contributions is for "Earthquake Relief."

Billy A. Melvin to Step Down As Executive Director of NAE

Wheaton, Ill. — Dr. Billy A. Melvin has announced that he will retire from his position as executive director of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) on March 31, 1995.

Upon his retirement, Dr. Melvin will have completed 28 years as head of NAE. Under his leadership the association has grown by 70 percent and now represents some 50,000 local churches from 75 denominations (including The Brethren Church), and more than 200 para-church ministries and school.

This broad network of evangelicals has become a major voice in the American religious scene. It is the largest representation of evangelical denominations, churches, and Christian organizations in the country. All members must subscribe to a Statement of Faith which requires belief in the Bible "as the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God."

"[Dr. Melvin] has effectively brought evangelicals together and helped us appreciate the value of united action," said Dr. Don Argue, NAE president, commenting on Melvin's decision to retire. "As a true Christian statesman, he has impacted all of our lives. The imprint of his convictions and vision for the evangelical community will forever be a part of NAE's history."

A search committee has been named to find a replacement* for Dr. Melvin. The committee will bring its recommendation to the 1994 October meeting of NAE's Board of Administration. If elected, the new leader will assume office immediately following the association's 53rd annual Convention to be held March 5–7, 1995.

*Persons interested in applying for the position are invited to submit a resumé and a one-page statement of their personal theology and view of Christian unity by April 30, 1994. Correspondence should be addressed to Dr. John H. White, c/o NAE, 450 Gundersen Drive, Carol Stream, IL 60188.

Truth and love go together. The mind grows by taking in truth; the heart grows by giving out love.

— *Warren Wiersbe*

Bible Club Gains Sanction From Arizona High School

Tucson, Ariz. — After a four-month struggle with public school officials, a Bible study group at University High School in Tucson had its first official meeting on February 18, 1994.

Jennifer Ponder, leader of the Bible club, contacted The Rutherford Institute in November of 1993 for legal help when her school principal denied her permission to make the Bible study group an official school club, claiming that to do so would violate the separation of church and state.

Rutherford Institute attorney Douglas Drury wrote a letter to the local school board explaining that the school's denial of the Bible club was not only a violation of students' constitutional rights, but a violation of the Equal Access Act as well.

"The Equal Access Act of 1984 specifically prohibits the denial of equal access to student groups simply because of their religious or political nature," Drury stated.

According to Drury, once the school board realized what the law really says, they were cooperative and eventually consented to allow the Bible club. In fact, recently her school principal commended Jennifer Ponder for standing up for her beliefs and told her that the district had changed its policy on Bible clubs because of the action she had taken.

"This case is important because there is increasing pressure in public schools to remove any mention of religion, and the local governing bodies need to make sure that students don't lose their constitutional rights when they walk through the school door," said Drury.

The Rutherford Institute is an international, nonprofit civil liberties organization specializing in the defense of religious liberty.

Earthquake Not All Bad

One detail overlooked by media coverage of the Los Angeles earthquake was that the heart of our nations' pornography industry "happened" to coincide with the epicenter of the quake.

The communities of Chatsworth, Canogo Park, and Northridge are home to approximately 70 companies that produce more then 95 percent of our nation's output of porn videos. The largest of these companies, which normally produces more than 100 obscene videos each year, was especially hard hit and lost its equipment and its video masters.

From The Grape Vine



Thirty-three Brethren from the Central District gathered at the Iowa Machine Shed Restaurant in Davenport, Iowa, February 18–19 for the district's annual **Davenport Conference.** The event began with the Friday evening meal, after which Rev. Robert Schubert, associate pastor of the Lanark, Ill., First Brethren Church, led the group in singing, playing his guitar for accompaniment. Then Rev. Gene Burry, co-pastor of the Hammond Avenue Brethren Church in Waterloo, Iowa, presented a message. The group met again Saturday morning for breakfast, more singing, and additional messages by Rev. Burry. The conference and the messages by Rev. Burry inspired those present to realize that Christians can laugh, be joyful, and share their love with a God-centered life.

Pastor Bill and Mrs. Gene Skeldon of the Oak Hill, W.Va., First Brethren Church made a visit to the Holy Land in February. This was his seventh trip to Palestine and her sixth. Rev. Skeldon looks upon his visits to the Holy Land as spiritual pilgrimages and considers the pilgrimage a "fifth gospel." The Skeldons made this visit with 15 people (including the pastor and his wife) from the Oak Hill Church of the Nazarene. Rev. Skeldon said this was his best trip ever, with perfect weather and a very knowledgeable guide. In fact, he felt so sorry for the folks of the Oak Hill First Brethren Church whom he left behind that he brought each one a gift.

Dr. J.D. "Bud" Hamel, Pastor Emeritus of the Sarasota, Fla., First Brethren Church, was presented the "Faithful Servant" award recently by the Suncoast Evangelical Society. Dr. Hamel was given the award in recognition for his lifetime of leadership.

T.J. McLaughlin and Ed Miller, members of the Pleasant View Brethren Church of Vandergrift, Pa., are going out of their way to serve the Lord and His church—literally. Last September these two men began driving to Ashland each Sunday afternoon to attend classes at Ashland Theological Seminary on Monday. Then they learned that the Fremont, Ohio, Brethren Church was without a pastor. So these men accepted the challenge to co-pastor this congregation on a part-time basis. Now, every Saturday they leave their families behind and make the long drive to Fremont (in northwestern Ohio), where they preach and care for other pastoral responsibilities on Sunday. Then they drive to Ashland, attend classes on Monday, and return home Monday night.

World Relief Launches Christian Volunteer Corps

Nyack, N.Y. — World Relief of the National Association of Evangelicals recently launched a new domestic volunteer program which offers Christians opportunities to meet people from the world's various cultures without ever leaving the United States.

The Christian Volunteer Corps, part of World Relief's Good Samaritan Network, will involve corps members in church-based ministry to refugees and immigrants in more that 25 locations around the U.S. The first corps volunteers are working in Chicago, Miami, and San Francisco.

Volunteers can serve in a number of locations—close to home or in another geographical setting. While giving six months to one year of service, volunteers gain work experience and career-building skills as they minister to people who have fled persecution, violence, and hardship in their homelands.

World Relief provides housing, food, health insurance, and a monthly allowance. Corps members work closely with committed bodies of believers and help them expand their ministries to those in need in the local community.

For more information, contact program director Mark Dombrofski in Nyack, N.Y., at 1-800-647-6493.

Top Sponsors of TV Violence

The following companies were the top sponsors of violence on prime-time TV from October 17 to November 13, 1993, according to the American Family Association (AFA). These findings are the results of monitoring done by AFA during the time period known as "fall sweeps."

Sponsors were rated on an ad-ratio basis, that is, the total number of violent incidents sponsored was divided by the total number of thirty-second commercials run by the advertiser.

1. Chrysler Corp.
2. ConAgra, Inc. (Butterball, Hunts, Peter Pan)
3. Burroughs Wellcome Co. (Actifed, Neosporin, Sudafed)
4. Grand Metropolitan, Inc. (Alpo, Burger King, Pillsbury)
5. Unilever United States Inc. (Dove, Ragu, Vaseline)
6. Miles Inc. (Alka-Seltzer, S.O.S. soap pads)
7. Helene Curtis Industries, Inc. (Degree, Finesse, Suave)
8. Campbell Soup Co.
9. PepsiCo
10. Ciba-Geigy Corp. (Acutrim, Desenex, Efidac/24)

In Memory

Mae Warfel, 83, February 27. Member for 61 years of the Elkhart First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Timothy P. Garner.

Frances Pauline Wise, 80, February 21. Member for 50 years of the Elkhart First Brethren Church, where she sang in the choir, served as a Sunday school teacher, and was active in church auxiliaries. Services by Pastor Timothy P. Garner.

James A. Davis, 50, February 17. Member for 20 years of the Bryan First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor H. Raymond Aspinall.

Gretchen French, 81, February 3. Regular attender and teacher for 27 years at Brethren House Ministries (St. Petersburg Brethren Church). She also regularly attended Florida District Conferences. Service by Pastor Phil Lersch.

Clara Jenkins, 93, February 2. Member of the North Manchester First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Marlin McCann.

Margaret Malone, 78, February 2. Member for 65 years of the Maurertown Brethren Church, where she served as a Sunday school teacher, church secretary, member of the official board, and W.M.S. member. Services by Pastor Richard Craver.

Von B. Tate, 81, February 1. Member since 1973 of the North Manchester First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Marlin McCann.

Donald R. Baker, 65, January 31. Member for 14 years of the Louisville First Brethren Church and co-chair with his wife, Betty, of the deacon board. He also served as teacher of the Young Adult Sunday school class and was co-chair of the church building committee at the time of his death. Memorial service by Pastor James Koontz.

Edward F. Shawley, 44, January 10. Member for 18 years of the Valley Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Bill Yoder.

Cletus A. Culler, 86, December 16. Member for 37 years of the Louisville First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor James Koontz.

H. Florence Bates, 76, September 19. Member for 29 years of the Lousiville First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor James Koontz.

Goldenaires

Loren and Estella Keslar, 50th, March 15. Members of the Valley Brethren Church.

Earl and Esther Derrer, 70th, February 7. (Also Mr. Derrer's 92nd birthday.) Members of the Lanark First Brethren Church.

Membership Growth

Lanark: 2 by transfer

New Lebanon: 2 by transfer

Pleasant View: 1 by baptism

Valley: 3 by baptism, 1 by transfer

St. Luke: 3 by baptism, 2 by transfer

My Missionary Faith Promise

In dependence upon God and in faith that he will supply, I will endeavor to give toward the worldwide missionary ministry of my church the amount of:

$ _______ (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)

Annual Total: $ ______________

I am reminded that a **FAITH PROMISE** of giving is an agreement between an individual and God to give to missions that which God enables to be given over and above regular giving. **FAITH PROMISE** is not a pledge to be collected. It is a promise to God - an act of faith wherein one states the amount he (she) believes God will enable them to give to missions during the year. The basis of **FAITH PROMISE** is a relationship between the individual and God. Explanations for non-payment are given to God alone. No individual record is kept. No one is to be contacted. The Christian who takes seriously the missionary mandate (Matthew 28:18-20) is encouraged to ask God what amount He should be trusted to provide. A **FAITH PROMISE** is made not on the basis of what one has to give, but on the basis of what is believed God will provide.

Date of Promise ___________ Signature ______________________

- -

separate and keep above as a personal reminder. . . .

MY FAITH PROMISE TO MISSIONS:

In dependence upon God and in faith that He will supply, I will endeavor to give toward the worldwide missionary ministry of my church the amount of:

$ _______ (weekly) (monthly) (yearly)

Without Name turn this portion into the church.

(MBBC 3/87)

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THE BRETHREN
Evangelist
APRIL 1994



Resultions on:

Health Care Reform and Termination of Medical Treatment

The two resolutions below were passed by the National Association of Evangelicals at its 52nd annual convention held March 6–8 at Dallas–Fort Worth, Texas. Because the subjects of these resolutions are of considerable interest to many Christians, the complete texts of the resolutions are being printed here.

Health Care Reform

The Congress of the United States is considering various health care reform proposals which will affect every American, all businesses and most institutions, including church-related hospitals and clinics.

The need for change seems evident. Health care inflation rates are nearly double that of general inflationary rates. In addition, it is troubling that so many Americans are without health insurance—some voluntarily, others for short periods of time, still others due to unemployment and factors beyond their control, and millions because they are uninsurable. The National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), therefore, welcomes health care reform and suggests the following principles should guide the debate:

- Abortion is not health care. Any health care plan which includes coverage for elective abortion should be rejected. This includes abortion referral, payment for abortion, or the training of medical personnel for abortion practices.
- Euthanasia should never be endorsed by government or surrogates, including mandatory health alliances. Furthermore, the right of people with disabilities to adequate medical care must be safeguarded. Budgetary caps could eventually require health care rationing; and if universal rationing of medical services occurs without government prohibition of euthanasia and protection of people with disabilities, the nation could enter a slippery slope toward an unacceptable "quality of life" ethic.
- Any health care plan should reinforce, not undermine, personal responsibility. Persons who engage in behavior which adversely affects their health, such as smoking, drug and alcohol abuse, promiscuity and over-eating, should be responsible for the additional medical liability.
- Since the cost of health care has risen significantly because of medical malpractice insurance, apparent frivolous claims, and extreme awards, corrective action through judicial and tort law reform is necessary without compromising the ability of injured persons to receive just compensation.

Recognizing the need for health care reforms and the desire to make health care available to all but also recognizing the complexity of the challenge, the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) calls upon the President and members of Congress to diligently seek to make health care accessible to all; to promote judicial and tort law reform which will bring into balance legitimate claims and fair compensation; to enlist the counsel and help of governmental institutions, social agencies, insurance companies and churches to establish health care provisions which will maximize the creativity of the private sector while minimizing governmental control. [✞]

Termination of Medical Treatment

Human beings are made in the image of God and are, therefore, of inestimable worth. God has given people the highest dignity of all creation. Such human dignity prohibits euthanasia, that is, actively *causing* a person's death.

In the past 30 years, medical technology has developed systems that have enabled physicians to more effectively care for their patients and save lives that would otherwise be lost. However, this technology has also resulted in the possibility of prolonging the dying process beyond its normal course. This often causes great suffering, not only for the patient, but also for the family, friends and caregivers.

Such technology also raises moral questions. For example, is it moral to withdraw a life-support system which is believed to be an inappropriate extension of the dying process? The National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) believes that in cases where patients are terminally ill, death appears imminent and treatment offers no medical hope for a cure, it is morally appropriate to request the withdrawal of life-support systems, allowing natural death to occur. In such cases, every effort should be made to keep the patient free of pain and suffering, with emotional and spiritual support being provided until the patient dies.

When a person's cerebral cortex dies, is it moral for the family or medical staff to withdraw life-support systems? The National Association of Evangelicals believes that in cases where extensive brain injury has occurred and there is clear medical indication that the patient has suffered brain death (permanent unconscious state), no medical treatment can reverse the process. (Brain death is not the equivalent of a coma. A patient might awaken from a coma, but not from brain death.) Removal of any life-support system at this time is morally appropriate and allows the dying process to proceed. Under such circumstances, appropriate action is best taken where there is guidance from a signed "living will" or a durable power of attorney for health care. Where there is no "living will" or durable power of attorney for health care, the decision to withdraw life support should be made by the family and/or closest friends in consultation with a member of the clergy, when available, and the medical staff.

NAE acknowledges that the withdrawal of life-support systems is an emotional and difficult issue. However, we believe that medical treatment that serves only to prolong the dying process has little value. It is better that the dying process be allowed to continue and the patient permitted to die.

This is especially true of those who know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. For as the Apostle Paul said: "To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord" (2 Cor. 5:8). [✞]

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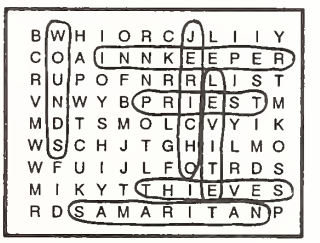
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1. Our neighbor is anyone, particularly someone in need.
2. We should love our neighbors and help them if they have a need, as the Good Samaritan did.







Continuing
An Unfinished Journey to Russia

By James Hollinger

LATE on the morning of August 6, 1993, I found myself sitting in the final session of the 105th General Conference of The Brethren Church, held in the convocation Center of Ashland University. We were concluding a Conference that had had as its theme, "Witnesses to the World." We had been challenged to witness more to the world. We had been challenged to pray more fervently in Concerts of Prayer. Now the BYIC was challenging us adults to be more earnest in our Christian walk. And Moderator-Elect Russ Gordon was challenging us with a wake-up call.

But my concentration kept getting interrupted by other thoughts that flooded my soul. My mind kept flashing back to the concluding session of General Conference one year earlier, held in Memorial Chapel. During that session, another Moderator-Elect, Rev. Glenn Grumbling, called an exhausted but exuberant Mark Baker to the platform to share some thoughts about his just-completed trip to Russia with Josh McDowell Ministries' "Mission to Russia 92." Mark talked with excitement and passion about the people of Russia and their extreme hunger for spiritual things.

Dr. Hollinger, a member of the Jefferson Brethren Church, is a surgeon with a practice in Goshen, Indiana.

A strong call to return

I was to learn later that Mark felt a strong call from God to return to Russia for an extended period of time to help introduce a curriculum entitled "Christian Ethics and Morality, a Foundation for Society" into the public schools of Russia. (*See "An Unfinished Journey to Russia" by Mark Baker, October 1992 EVANGELIST, pp. 4–5.*)

As I sat there in the final session of the 1993 General Conference, my mind also scanned the many events that had taken place in Mark's life following his decision to return to Russia. He had helped coordinate a massive effort in the Michiana area (lower Michigan, upper Indiana) to collect shoes and boots for Carelift for Kids 93. This effort brought in 36,000 pairs of shoes, socks, and boots. These were gathered into a warehouse, sorted, then shipped to Pennsylvania, from where they were sent to Russia in time for distribution in early winter.

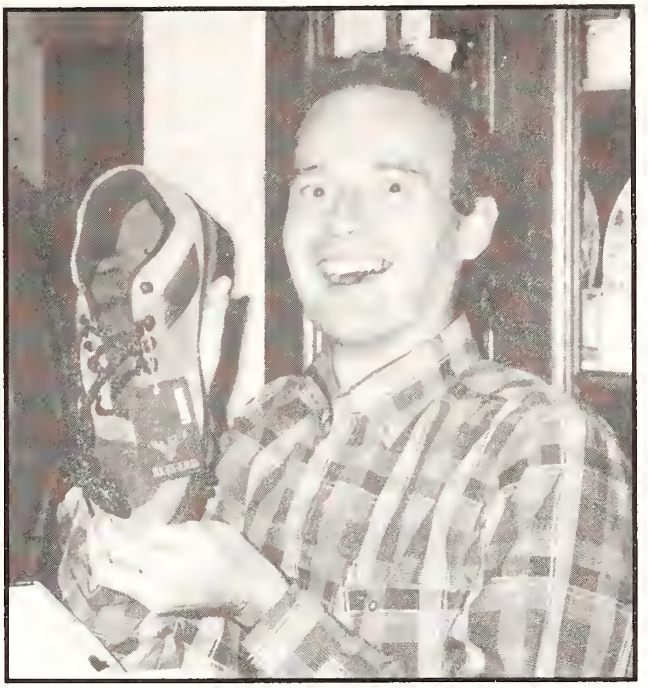
Mark had also successfully raised support for his year of missionary service in Russia. He had resigned his position as buyer/manager for Bethel Publishing Company. And he had been consecrated for his upcoming mission service. He had begun leading practice sessions for a Christmas cantata, when suddenly, on December 8, 1992, he was taken seriously ill.

We spent many hours in soul-searching, heart-wrenching, concentrated prayer for Mark. God miraculously intervened, and Mark recovered and was released from the hospital. (*See "A Significant Day in The Brethren Church," February 1993 EVANGELIST, pp. 8–9.*) After more weeks of recuperation, Mark was able to sing once again. We saw him make preparations for his return to Bethel Bookstore. But then suddenly, unexpectedly, he was taken from us.

These were the thoughts that flooded my mind, sending me on a roller coaster of emotions, as I sat in that General Conference session. The thoughts were intensified

by the fact that on my feet were a pair of Mark's shoes, which I planned to wear to Russia. For even as a sat in that session, I was planning to slip out before the final "Amen" in order to head for the Cleveland airport, from which I would embark on my own journey to Russia. I would fly to New York City, where I would meet the rest of a team from northern Indiana that was part of Mission to Russia 93 (MTR 93).

Even though Mark had passed away, his vision, his dedication, and his call had not died. Following his release from the hospital, Mark had talked to Ray Allison, a member of the Jefferson Brethren Church, where I attend. Mark had challenged Ray to consider mission work in some capacity. After Mark's death, Ray challenged the Jefferson congregation to continue in some small way Mark's calling. As a result, the Mission Ministry of the church had recommended to the congregation that MTR 93 be one of our above-budget, short-term mission projects for 1993. Meanwhile, my own daughter, Cindy, had been challenged by Josh McDowell at a Christmas vacation student conference in Indianapolis to consider short-term mission work in Russia.



Mark Baker with one of the shoes of the pair that he had planned to wear to Russia.

A vision continued

After being challenged by Ray, Cindy, and others, and remembering Mark's passion for the people in Russia, I decided to participate in Mission to Russia 93. Having made that decision, I was asked, along with Ray, if we would be willing to wear in Russia a pair of shoes that had been given to Mark in preparation for his year of service there. Thus, symbolically, Mark's vision for the Russian people would be continued.

So it was that Mark's shoes left Ashland University, traveled to Cleveland-Hopkins airport, then to John F. Kennedy airport in New York, through Helsinki, Finland, and finally on to Moscow Russia, on the journey that Mark himself was unable to make.

During the next ten days, Ray and I traded off wearing those shoes—through the streets of Moscow, into



Ray Allison wearing Mark's shoes in Moscow.

train stations, subway stations, market places, and through Red Square. Everywhere we turned as we wore those shoes, we found people who were hungry for the printed literature we offered them. Our primary volume was the book *More Than a Carpenter* by Josh McDowell, with the Gospel of John bound in that same volume. These had been printed on Russian printing presses for about eleven cents a copy. Together,

A Fire in the Land

A fire is burning in the land
of a nation in despair,
A voice that cries out to be fed;
is there anyone to care?
The hunger of many people,
not satisfied with bread.
Their souls call out for answers,
seeking to be led.
A people wandering aimlessly
with no direction and no hope.
"How can we survive?" they ask.
"How do you expect us to cope?"
The dirty little hands that beg
and plead for more;
The sad eyes and broken spirit
of generations so poor.
An elderly face hardened
by labor and war.
Tears flow of memories past,
the siege of St. Pete
a survivor did last.
O' land that cries,
your savior was born,
Dry your eyes
and rejoice this morn.
Salvation is only a page away,
say this prayer
And in your heart He'll stay.
"Dear Lord, I'm a sinner,
I'll confess I'm lost.
I believe in you, Jesus,
you paid the cost.
God, you sent us your son,
He took our blame,
So blow, dear Jesus,
and fan the flame."
A fire is burning in the land,
with a message of hope
and an outstretched hand.
God's word has the truth
so read with intent,
His message is clear,
believe and repent.
Be thirsty no more
His bread feeds the soul.
Drink up His Spirit,
make yourself whole.
Yes, a fire is burning
across the land,
A message of love
to all man.

— Ray Allison

we and the other MTR 93 teams were able to distribute nearly a million pieces of literature in several cities in Russia.

After a short stay in Moscow, we wore Mark's shoe to Nizhniy Novgorod (Gorky) and finally to St. Petersburg. Everywhere we went, we received a friendly reception, and for the most part people were eager to devour the literature we gave them. Investigation has revealed that many pieces of literature are read by as many as 20 people. Thus the effectiveness of each piece of literature is multiplied.

As a result of this whirlwind trip of three Russian cities, we had gotten at least a brief glimpse of the lives of Russian people, and we had witnessed their hunger for knowledge. But we had also seen evidence of the numerous cults that are springing up, offering to fill the spiritual vacuum that is so evident there. We had discovered a whole generation of people who have not had enough exposure to truth to be able readily to discern truth from lies. This challenges us to pray even more fervently that the Holy Spirit will give a spirit of discernment to this people.

Recent happenings

Since our return from Russia last August, many more things have happened as a part of the "Unfinished Journey to Russia." Soon after we arrived home, Carelift 94 was begun, gathering school supplies for Russian children. These were once again sent to Pennsylvania, where they were packed and shipped in large sea-going containers to Russia. In addition, 100,000 salvation bracelets were made by Christians in the Michiana area and shipped to Russia, to be shared with children and adults there.

Ray Allison just recently returned from Carelift for Kids 94, during which he was able to once again wear Mark's shoes in Russia. This time he had the opportunity to walk into schools and orphanages with school supplies, literature, and other humanitarian aid. Mission to Russia 94 has also been set for July 8 to 18, and several from the National BYIC are planning to continue the "Unfinished Journey" as a part of that venture.

All of us as Christians continue to be challenged to be witnesses to the world, whether we are called to that part of the world that is in our own neighborhood or our place of employment, or whether we are called to be part of a short-term mission project in some other city or some country around the world. Who will write the next chapter in the continuing story of the "Unfinished Journey"? [⇧]

1993 Financial Report For The Brethren Church, Inc.

By Ronald W. Waters
Director of Brethren Church Ministries and Treasurer

THE BRETHREN CHURCH, Inc., ended 1993 in much better financial condition than anticipated, thanks to significant cost-cutting and the generous support of our churches. A complete report will be provided at General Conference, but I want to report the good news to you in advance.

In our working budget, we had anticipated a $43,675 loss. Instead, I am happy to report the pleasant news that we had a $33,688 surplus over expenses.

You may be asking, "How could we have a $77,000-plus turnaround from the projections?" Believe me, I had the same question! Following are some of the reasons that the report is so positive.

1. Fair Share Support for Brethren Church Ministries was up $13,000 over 1992 receipts (up $22,000 over budget projections). The increased giving was received mostly during the months of June, July, and August, immediately after the proposal for organizational cuts was released.
2. Other contributions were up over $8,000, due to a generous gift from National Brethren Youth and a larger than normal General Conference offering.
3. We had one-time income of nearly $10,000 from the sale of equipment.
4. Ministry project expenses were nearly $20,000 below projections for several reasons, but largely because a smaller number of churches participated in Passing On the Promise than projected. (This category also includes the National BYIC Convention, denominational youth ministry, Crusader Program, and commission projects.)
5. Salaries and related expenses were $12,600 below projections because of staff reductions, including cost savings for my study leave.
6. We also reduced expenses below projections in the following categories: printing and promotion ($5,100), staff travel ($4,700), net designated distributions ($1,400), GCEC/commission meeting expenses ($1,600), and General Conference ($1,000).
7. We wrote down the value of Brethren publications inventory to the tune of about $7,000. Also, we incurred about $3,000 in expenses for the Special Committee for Financial and Organizational Planning that was covered by special gifts in 1994. (These items actually reduced the amount of surplus.)

While this is a positive report, it does call for continued and diligent support from all our churches. Some of the extra income was possible on a one-time basis. Some of the savings, particularly in the area of salary and related expenses, is also temporary.

On behalf of GCEC, I want to express our thanks for your support during the past year and in the future as well. [⇧]

Bound Together by Love

By James C. Koontz

MY FATHER recently returned from helping a small community in northwestern Missouri to make repairs and to clean up from the devastating flood that occurred last summer. He told us that the damage done by that flood was greater than our wildest dreams.

The people in the small town where my father worked said that what had happened to them was indeed terrible. But they added that the flood did have its good points. As a result of the flood, they had drawn much closer to one another, and they had a greater sense of unity than they had ever had before.

A farmer who needed to be planting oats was driving a tractor with a bucket on it through the streets of the town so that people could put their trash into it for him to haul away. When the people of the town asked what they could do to help him get his crops planted, he would reply, "Don't worry about helping me. This is one very small way I can help those who really need it so much."

Unity is a force that binds individuals together enabling them to do things they could never do alone. In a world where news of disharmony, corruption, mistrust, and revolt are common, we need a strong bond of unity among us as Christians, as Brethren, as local congregations, as districts, and as a denomination, beneath the banner of Jesus Christ. It must draw us together tighter than denominational or district affiliations. It must bind us tighter than themes and common goals, which are short-lived and need to be renewed periodically.

Let us look, therefore, at the blessings of unity, the power of unity, and the divinely directed cords of unity.

The blessings of unity

The blessings of unity are illustrated for us in Psalm 133. The first verse of that Psalm states: "How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity!"

The word unity in this verse means to be or become one, to unite as one in a particular place. Such unity has the ability to attract, to draw others to it.

David likens this unity to the precious anointing oil that was poured on Aaron's head when he was set apart as high priest. That oil had a rich, fragrant aroma. When Aaron was anointed, he was not just dabbed with a spot of oil, as we do when we anoint someone who is sick. Rather, so much oil was used that it ran down his head, onto his beard, and onto his robes. Possibly it even dripped onto the ground at his feet.

The scent of the oil filled the air, riveting everyone's attention upon the ceremony of setting Aaron apart. What joy! What excitement! What an experience of renewal, blessing, and inspiration it must have been for the nation of Israel at that time! We experience some of this same excitement, this same blessing and inspiration, when we set apart someone for God's work as a pastor or as a deacon or deaconess.

The psalmist goes on to compare the blessings of unity to the dew that falls on Hermon. The dew on Mount Hermon is sometimes so heavy that it looks as though a hard rain had occurred. These dews water the mountainside, causing the vegetation to become lush and the cultivated areas to grow.

In Isaiah 26:19 the prophet uses dew as a symbol of resurrection and new life. Here in Psalm 133 the psalmist symbolically carries the dew of Hermon to Mount Zion, the Temple area of Jerusalem. He says, "It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion."

In contrast to Hermon, Mount Zion is an arid region. If the dews of Hermon were to fall on Mount Zion, they would refresh and revitalize it. Such are the blessings of unity, as God bestows the blessings of life evermore on His people.

Thus David describes the blessings of unity of fellow Israelites, of fellow Christians, of fellow Brethren. Unity exudes a life-giving aroma that is very pleasing to all who are near. Unity among God's people is something that refreshes, that brings healing, that invigorates the body of believers, as well as the rest of the world. It is a rich blessing to all who experience it.

The power of unity

To illustrate the power of unity, let us look at a passage in Second Chronicles 30. This chapter records how King Hezekiah sent couriers throughout Israel calling the people together to celebrate the Passover. The people had not gathered in large numbers to celebrate the Passover for many years. In the northern tribes, a few of the people humbled themselves and went to Jerusalem to celebrate. But for the most part, the people scorned, ridiculed, and laughed at these messengers. *(continued on next page)*

Rev. Koontz is pastor of the First Brethren Church in Louisville, Ohio.

This is an edited version of a message Rev. Koontz presented, as the conference moderator-elect, to the Ohio District Conference held March 12 at the Gretna Brethren Church. (See page 16 for a report of that conference.)

In Judah, however, the response was quite different. There the hand of the Lord was on the people, giving them unity of mind—literally one heart. This unity centered on carrying out what the king and his officials had ordered—following the word of the LORD. They repented; they worshiped; they prayed; they sacrificed together with one heart. They did these things for seven days, then decided to continue for another seven days.

Note what took place as a result: "The priests and the Levites stood to bless the people, and God heard them, for their prayer reached heaven, his holy dwelling place" (v. 27). God heard their prayers. When we are humbly united in wholehearted praise and worship of God, our prayers are heard. And God will heal our land and bless the work of our hand. That is the power of believers who are humbly united as one in wholehearted worship of God. He hears our prayers and heals.

The cords of unity

In Colossians 3 we find God's directives for developing this kind of unity. Verse one tells us to "set our *hearts* on things above." Jesus said that where our treasure is, that is where our hearts will be also. So we are to make things above our treasure. Verse 2 tells us that we are also to "set our *minds* on things above." We are to look at life from a heavenly, eternal perspective.

Our lives are to be "hidden in Christ" (v. 3). Christ is to be our life. We are not our own; we have been bought with a price, and that price was Christ's death on the cross. He is to be our focus and our source of direction. And when that is the case, He gives us abundant life here and now and everlasting life in the world to come.

In verses 9–17 Paul lists behaviors and virtues that we who are in Christ should possess for one another. In verse 14 he says that love is the cord that binds all these other virtues together in perfect unity. This love is the kind that seeks what is best for another. It is the kind that lays aside self for another person. It is the kind of love demonstrated by that farmer in the small Missouri town, who instead of planting oats was helping his neighbors who lived in town.

Look what love does. It binds everything together into perfection, into perfect unity (v. 14). The emphasis here is on the oneness of community, which is united into one whole.

The unity spoken of here is not that of a Lincoln Log house,* which though joined together into one structure has weak links, poor stability, and can easily be knocked over. The people in some churches are like that. They are merely affiliated with the church through regular attendance, but they are not willing to commit themselves to the full responsibilities of membership.

Nor is it the unity of a house made of Lego bricks,* which has stronger connections and greater stability than a Lincoln Log house, but can still be taken apart without much difficulty. People in churches with this kind of unity become members and contribute financially to the work of the church, but they are only lightly involved in the ministries and work of the church locally and at the district and denominational levels.

"Unity exudes a life-giving aroma that is very pleasing to all who are near. . . . It is a rich blessing to all who experience it."

God illustrates the unity He desires by pointing to the human body. It takes a great force to tear the body apart, because it is knit together with bones and tendons and ligaments and muscles. The church with this kind of unity will weather many strong storms.

Paul tells us in Ephesians 4:15–16 that we are to grow up into Him who is the Head, that is, Christ, through whom the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. There we have it. When we are fully one in Christ, we become a body which is very difficult to take apart.**

"Imagine what we could do as Brethren if we were united as one body in heart, soul, and mind for the Lord Jesus Christ."

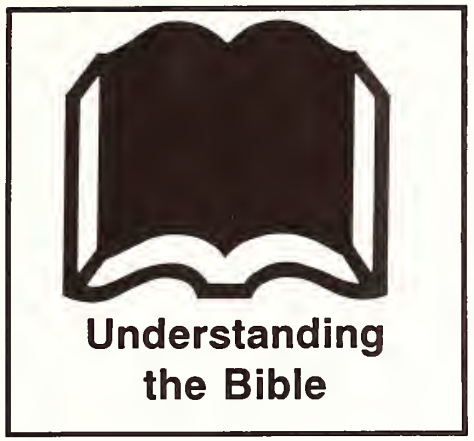
During Bill Clinton's presidential campaign, the homosexual element of our society rallied around him so strongly that some even sold their expensive homes and lived in their cars in order to donate the proceeds from the sale of their homes to his campaign. A number of militant homosexuals hold down jobs with salaries in six figures. Monthly they gave large amounts of their income to Clinton's campaign. They united together in order to get their candidate into the White House. Granted, they didn't put him there alone, since they constitute less that 10 percent of our nation's population. But this does illustrate what a group can accomplish when it is unified by a common goal.

Imagine what we could do as Brethren if we were united as one body in heart, soul, and mind for the Lord Jesus Christ. Think of the pleasing, refreshing aroma of love, forgiveness, and patience we would exude that would bring healing to hearts and lives. That is what being a Christian is all about. Let our prayer be:

Bind us together, Lord; bind us with cords that cannot be broken; bind us together with LOVE. [⇧]

*When he gave this message at the Ohio District Conference, Rev. Koontz had two small houses on the platform, one constructed of Lincoln Logs and the other of Lego bricks, which he used to illustrate this part of his message.

**In the original message, Rev. Koontz included here three recommendations for achieving greater unity in the Ohio District. See the report of the Ohio District Conference on page 16 for a summary of these recommendations.



Historic Brethren Slogans About the Bible

Second of Three Parts

By Dale R. Stoffer

DURING MUCH of their history, the Brethren have been fond of certain slogans that have served as summary statements about their convictions regarding Scripture. This article is the second in a series devoted to three of these Brethren slogans.

"The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible"

Probably the most often recited slogan in The Brethren Church has been "The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible" or its counterpart, "The Gospel, the whole Gospel, and nothing but the Gospel." This slogan came to prominence in the Progressive movement of the 1870s and early 1880s, and continued to be used frequently up through the 1950s.

The Progressive movement actually borrowed this motto from the Disciples of Christ. But its origins go back to the Anglican William Chillingworth, who, in a pamphlet he wrote in 1635, stated: "The Bible, the Bible, I say, the Bible only, is the Religion of Protestants."

Invariably, the appearances of this saying prior to the division in the early 1880s are found in the writings of the Progressive Brethren. One of the first occurrences of the slogan is in B.F. Moomaw's 1872 encouragement to readers to "engage fully in [God's] service, with this motto as your beacon—THE GOSPEL, THE WHOLE GOSPEL, AND NOTHING BUT THE GOSPEL."[1]

The emphasis in this slogan has fallen on different phrases over the course of the history of The Brethren Church. At the time of the 1882–1883 division with the German Baptist Brethren, Brethren Church leaders emphasized the third phrase, "nothing but the Gospel."

This is demonstrated in a resolution adopted by the Progressive Brethren immediately after Henry Holsinger was officially disfellowshipped by the German Baptist Brethren. The resolution stated, "Resolved, That our motto shall be the Bible, and nothing but the Bible." By emphasizing this part of the slogan, the leaders of the Progressive Brethren movement were clearly setting themselves against what they perceived as additions to the gospel in the form of "mandatory legislation" passed by the Brethren Annual Meeting. This legislation, together with other unwritten traditions, formed what was known as the "order of the Brethren," which was held to have the same authority as Scripture itself. To the Progressives, this position was a distortion of the pure gospel given through Christ.[2]

A new emphasis

As The Brethren Church moved beyond the division of the 1880s and into the mainstream of American religious life, a new emphasis appeared in the Brethren motto. Because the Brethren upheld some beliefs and practices that were unique within the larger Protestant church (trine immersion, feetwashing, the Love Feast, nonresistance, the anointing service), they began to give added stress to the second part of the motto, "the whole gospel."

The Brethren found their unique place among American denominations because they were willing to maintain certain beliefs and practices that other groups considered unimportant or unnecessary. This traditional Brethren desire to obey all the teachings and examples of Christ and His apostles was captured in the "whole gospel plea," as it came to be known.

Liberalism and fundamentalism

Interestingly, this Brethren motto was used to preserve important Brethren positions in controversies with both *liberalism* and *fundamentalism*. Against *liberal* tendencies to undermine the authority of Scripture, the motto was reaffirmed in "The Message of the Brethren Ministry" in 1921 to stress that our final authority remains the Bible, not human reason or experience. Against the *fundamentalist* attempt to make "The Message of the Brethren Ministry" into a binding creed in 1938, Brethren leaders (even some Grace Brethren) held that the "Bible-alone" foundation of the church would be jeopardized by such an action.

This Brethren motto has thus served to reinforce the truths that, as Brethren, we seek to practice and obey all that we find in Scripture, and that we need no other authority than the Bible. Creeds, confessions, Annual Meeting minutes, human experience, and reason are all inferior to Scripture. The Bible alone stands as the arbiter of truth for the Brethren. This motto should remind us today of the central place Scripture must play in our lives, both individually and corporately.

This slogan upholds a further truth that is especially important today. It declares that Scripture provides normative or absolute truth. This conviction cuts across the grain of modern pluralism and relativism, which hold nothing as authoritative. [✝]

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[1]B.F. Moomaw, "Letter of Inquiry Answered," *The Gospel Visitor* 22 (September 1872): p. 275.

[2]Roger E. Sappington, ed., *The Brethren in Industrial America* (Elgin: The Brethren Press, 1985), pp. 459–461.

Dr. Stoffer is assistant professor of historical theology at Ashland Theological Seminary. He serves on The Brethren Church's Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication, which is preparing this series of articles.

Summary of
The Brethren Church
Financial and Organizational Study

February 1994

Background

General Conference in 1993 named a Special Committee on Financial and Organizational Planning "to hire and work with an outside facilitator to develop comprehensive strategies for long-range and short-range financial and organizational planning in The Brethren Church, based upon the priorities we have established for our ministries."

Facilitator

The committee hired Norman L. Edwards, a Christian consultant from Seattle, Washington. Mr. Edwards has conducted studies of financial and organizational issues for the National Association of Evangelicals as well as numerous seminaries, denominations, and Christian organizations.

Study Procedure

Mr. Edwards conducted his study in light of the "Priorities for the Nineties," which were approved by General Conference as the focus for the church: spiritual formation, sharing the faith, leadership development, and church planting.

He and his staff interviewed the members of the study committee, five executives of the national church, 46 local pastors, 33 laypeople, and four other people who had held leadership positions in the national church. (They attempted to reach 50 pastors and 50 laypeople, but some could not be contacted.)

Of the local church interviews, 63 people were male and 16 female. All districts were represented, with more interviews in the larger districts. Those interviewed came from churches of different sizes, with 32 from churches with average attendance of less than 100, 32 from churches of 100 to 200, and 15 from churches of over 200. The ages of those interviewed likewise varied, with 25 people under age 40, 36 people age 40 to 60, and 18 people over age 60. The average number of years they had been in The Brethren Church was 33.6.

Denominational Comparisons

Mr. Edwards determined that Brethren give to their local churches for all purposes **less than half** of what evangelicals of some similar denominations give, and they give a lower percentage of their local church income to denominational ministries: (*see box*)

Denomination	Members	Giving per Member	Percent to Denom. Min.
The Brethren Church	13,132	$ 592	13.0%
Mennonite Brethren	16,843	$1,753	20.3%
U. Brethren in Christ	25,563	$2,683	17.3%
Missionary Church	29,285	$1,167	- - -
Brethren in Christ	20,819	$1,095	14.9%

The Brethren Church also has the smallest national staff: Brethren Church (9.5 full-time equivalent positions), Mennonite Brethren (13), United Brethren in Christ (15), Missionary Church (22.5), Brethren in Christ (31).

Funding for national programs has experienced a shortfall for several years. Giving reached its high point in 1985, when 75% of full Fair Share was received. In 1991, only 64% of Fair Share was received. In 1993, 72% was received, thanks to an increase after May. During 1992 and 1993, about 30% of churches paid their full Fair Share contribution.

Highlights of the Survey

The two services most frequently mentioned as **essential services** provided by the National Office were giving pastoral and ministry support and providing information about the denomination.

Most people felt that the present role of the **Director of Brethren Church Ministries** (DBCM) was to oversee church programs (30)* or provide general administrative support (27). Only 8 mentioned voicing the vision for the church. When asked what his role **should be**, fewer people mentioned overseeing programs (29) and administrative support (11), more mentioned giving the church a vision (20), and 11 people stated that it should be to provide general leadership.

People understood the present role of the **Director of Pastoral Ministries** to be conflict resolution (45), facilitating relations between pastors and churches (30), being a pastor to pastors (30), and providing a placement service (28). When asked what the role **should be**, fewer people mentioned conflict resolution (31) and placement service (19), and 11 people stated that the office should be proactive in building up the pastorate. People were evenly divided on whether the office should be expanded; 15 mentioned expanding the function at the district level.

People understood the role of **GCEC** to be overseeing the National Office (31), planning General Conference (21), implementing vision for the church (15), and conducting business between conferences (13). When asked what it **should be**, people placed somewhat less emphasis on overseeing the National Office (25) and planning Conference (13); implementing vision and conducting business remained about the same at 15 and 12, respectively.

Almost all the people interviewed receive The Brethren Evangelist. Large numbers of them saw the magazine's purpose to be serving as a communications instrument in the church, giving information about the church, or providing inspirational articles. A much

*Figures in parentheses are the number of people giving that response out of 79 surveyed.

smaller number mentioned giving unity to the church, encouraging spiritual growth, serving as a forum for current issues, or explaining Brethren doctrine. On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 high), they rated the Evangelist 2.5 in usefulness to the work of their church and 3.6 in helpfulness to them personally.

When asked about the most important services provided by the **Missionary Board**, people most often mentioned the following: missions information, speakers, oversight of missions program, support for home missions, and prayer and praise sheets. Most felt that the role of the board was (and should be) leading and implementing the church's missions emphasis and (to a lesser degree) overseeing missions and planting churches. They rated the board 3.8 out of 5 on helping their local church advance the cause of missions.

Those interviewed expressed overwhelming support for **church planting**. They said that churches should give for church planting in their own districts (72) and in other districts (63). When asked at what level church planting should be addressed, 44 said a cooperation between districts and the Missionary Board, 20 said at the district level, 7 said by the Missionary Board, and 5 said initiated by the district.

When asked about the **use of church income**, 35 said their church's support of denominational programs was determined by how they valued the programs; 27 said by the funds available, and 4 said they didn't know.

When asked what was the most essential reason to have a **national organization or denomination**, most said it maintains a united focus for churches of shared heritage. Others mentioned that it gives leadership and vision, provides network support, and gives accountability.

When asked if the benefits of the denomination warranted their **continued support** at the present level, 73 people said yes; 5 said no, but 2 of those said they would still pay. When asked if the benefits warranted **increased support**, 43 said yes, 15 said no, 10 gave no answer, and 6 said maybe or in some areas.

When asked who **articulates the vision** for the church, 25 people said the DBCM, 15 said GCEC, 6 said the moderator, 6 said pastors, and 6 didn't know. Nineteen other answers were given. When asked who **should** articulate the vision, 17 said the DBCM, 17 said GCEC, 13 said local boards and pastors, and 4 said the moderator. Fourteen other answers were given. The majority of people interviewed could not state the "Priorities for the Nineties."

Findings

Mr. Edwards found that there exists in The Brethren Church a strong **resistance to centralized authority**. People are reluctant even to draw lines of authority and responsibility. He saw almost no consensus about where the **vision and leadership** of the denomination should come from. While he acknowledged that the real work of the church takes place at the congregational level, he noted that the Brethren do not take advantage of the strength that comes from a **unified vision** of God's calling for us.

Mr. Edwards found **three key issues** that the Brethren must address:

- Stewardship
- Leadership and authority at the national level
- Defining the focus of the national organization

Mr. Edwards concluded the following about **stewardship**:

- The Brethren Church needs a revival in the area of biblical stewardship.
- This revival should be led by someone at the national level.
- Leadership at all levels (national, district, and local) must take greater responsibility for encouraging Fair Share support.
- The lack of full Fair Share support is paralleled by a low level of giving in local churches.
- Stewardship education, addressing such issues as debt reduction, planned giving, and estate planning, would benefit individuals and families, congregations, and the denomination.
- In the long term, the greatest denominational growth will come from church planting.

Mr. Edwards concluded the following about **leadership**:

- A suspicion of national leadership is stifling growth in The Brethren Church.
- There is little connection between our mandate to reach the lost and the tasks assigned to the leadership in the National Office.
- The national leadership has been relegated to maintenance rather than outreach.
- The lack of a consistent and unified voice to lead and challenge the denomination is a critical handicap to growth.
- Both pastors and laypeople must be convinced that the best days of The Brethren Church lie ahead.
- The "Priorities for the Nineties" can set the direction, if national leaders are empowered to lead and appropriate funding is available.

Mr. Edwards concluded the following about **the national focus**:

- The structure of the national church should facilitate the carrying out of the Great Commission; this is a calling which we as local churches can do together but not alone.
- Church planting must be the highest priority of the denomination. This is where most denominational growth will come from.
- A denomination that is not opening new churches aggressively is a dying denomination.
- Growth at home is critical for maintaining support for missions overseas.
- Strong support for church planting exists in the local churches.
- The national church must be reorganized to facilitate and support church planting. The present structure cuts church planting off from the other activities of the national church.

Recommendations

Mr. Edwards discussed ways in which addressing the three key issues above might affect the areas of Brethren Church Ministries, Pastoral Ministries, the Missionary Board, communications, and accounting procedures.

GCEC has not yet reached consensus on what specific actions should be taken as a result of Mr. Edwards' report. By August, GCEC expects to have an organizational model to bring to General Conference to start the discussion process. [⇧]

World Relief:
A Mission to Change Lives

By Art Gay
World Relief Executive Director

FOR FIFTY YEARS World Relief of the National Association of Evangelicals has depended on the partnership of evangelical denominations in the U.S. to bring help to the world's poor. And for most of those years, The Brethren Church has been one of World Relief's key partners.

In 1994, World Relief celebrates its 50th year of ministry. During World War II, evangelical churches joined together to form the "War Relief Commission"—providing "food for the body and food for the soul" for Europe's suffering. While World Relief's ministry has grown significantly in the intervening years, the organization's commitment to providing "food for the body and food for the soul" has remained the same.

World Relief's ministries of providing "food for the body" are well-publicized: responding to victims of natural disaster and war, helping poor families meet their own needs through "life loans" and job training, providing a safe haven for refugees, teaching low-cost methods of child health.

What is often less publicized—but just as important—is World Relief's continuing commitment to providing "food for the soul." As evangelicals, we believe that good works are part of the gospel; spiritual ministries complement physical ministries, and vice versa.

"Since my God has done so much for me, I cannot help but proclaim the mighty and wonderful things He has done!"

In my travels for World Relief, I have had the privilege of seeing and hearing stories of lives that have been changed through the partnership of World Relief and The Brethren Church.

Sri Lanka: *"My God has done so much for me!"*



Pushpakumara, a young man in Sri Lanka, felt he had nothing to live for—until a compassionate pastor reached out to him.

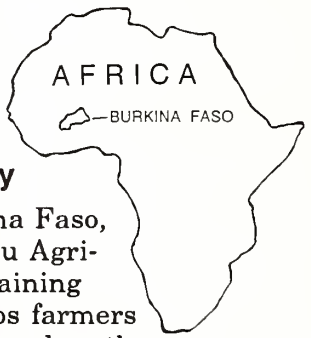
Suffering from an incurable skin disease, isolated from society inside his home, Pushpakumara was an increasing burden to his poor, debt-ridden family as he grew older. His depression was intense.

"On the evening when I decided to end my life," Pushpakumara remembers, "a stranger walked into my isolated room, saying he had heard about me and wanted to come to speak and befriend me. As time passed, I came to know he was a Christian pastor. He prayed, laying his hands on my head, asking his God to heal me of this incurable disease. It is three years now since I have been completely healed!"

The pastor helped the family obtain a loan through World Relief and the Lanka Evangelical Development Service, a local partner. With the loan, the family was able to breed pigs and improve its income.

More importantly, Pushpakumara came to know Christ through this pastor's kindness. "The God I came to know through my illness has graciously blessed me," he says. "With the pig project at home, we are able to live a simple life, content with what God has given us. Since my God has done so much for me, I cannot help but proclaim the mighty and wonderful things He has done!"

Burkina Faso: A harvest for eternity



In Burkina Faso, the Poundou Agricultural Training Center helps farmers learn improved methods of farming. Students live for an entire year at the center, where "the field is the classroom," according to World Relief West Africa Director Moise Napon. And the training pays off—students



A student in his peanut farm at the Poundou Agricultural Training Center in Burkina Faso.

"In my travels for World Relief, I have had the privilege of seeing and hearing stories of lives that have been changed through the partnership of World Relief and The Brethren Church."

are usually able to produce five times as much as the best farms in the area.

Both non-Christians and Christians study at the center, and World Relief staff members do not hesitate to share their faith. "The staff fasts and prays, asking God for guidance in the selection of the non-Christian students," says Napon. As a result of their ministry, five students received Christ at the center last year.

Flood relief ministry brings many to Christ



"What church do you go to?" asked a woman whose house had been damaged by flooding in Des Moines, Iowa, in the summer of 1993.

"Why do you want to know?" responded Charles Austin, a volunteer for Christian Relief Effort, a ministry aided by World Relief.

"We want what you people have," she said.

Austin, a retired electronics worker who was serving as a chaplain during the post-flood clean-up, heard such statements many times last summer. One Des Moines man, who had lost many of his possessions, said to Austin, "I want you to come over to my house and lead me to the Lord." And an entire family gave their lives to Christ as a result of the witness of Christian volunteers, and they are now attending the First Assembly of God in Des Moines.

This fruitful flood relief ministry actually started nine years ago. That's when Des Moines-area pastors began praying together that God would use them to make a difference in their city. In 1993, their prayers were answered in a most unlikely way.

Former refugees become missionaries

At the Philippine Refugee Processing Center (PRPC), refugees from Southeast Asia reside for six months or so before coming to the U.S. While there, they learn English and other skills they will need for daily life.

Refugees can also get a spiritual education, thanks to World Relief's spiritual ministries program. Since 1980, more than 8,100 refugees at the PRPC have been baptized after confessing Christ as Savior and learning His word through excellent Bible studies.

For the last seven years, Lina Hervas has coordinated World Relief's spiritual ministries program at the PRPC. In December 1993, Lina traveled from her native Philippines to attend the Urbana (Ill.) Missions Conference. At Urbana, she was delighted to see three former refugees who had attended Bible studies and other ministries she had led. The three young Vietnamese women had accepted Christ at the PRPC and were now preparing to return to Asia as short-term missionaries.

"This is why World Relief does spiritual ministry work as well as medical programs and education at the camp," said Lina. "It isn't enough to just provide physical assistance."

Your support of World Relief has brought food, clothing, medicine, and new hope to people for fifty years. It has also produced an abundant spiritual harvest around the world. Thank you for providing "food for the body and food for the soul" for the world's suffering. As World Relief and The Brethren Church minister in the world today, God will use our partnership for His glory. [✝]



World Relief Executive Director Art Gay and his wife Joann at the Philippine Refugee Processing Center.

Secrets of "Great-Giving" Churches

Exposed by Richard Winfield
Editor and World Relief Coordinator

SOME BRETHREN CHURCHES are great givers to World Relief. They give three, four, even five or more times their "Fair Share" for this ministry. The congregations that do so come in various sizes, ranging from very small (less than 10 members), through medium (100 to 200 members), to large—by Brethren standards—(more than 250 members).

Why do these churches support World Relief so generously? And how do they receive the money they give to World Relief?

To get some answers to these questions, I wrote to seven of these "great-giving" Brethren congregations and asked them about their support for World Relief. I received replies from five of the seven churches: White Dale near Terra Alta, W.Va. (5 members/average attendance of 18); Stockton, Calif. (38/48); South Bend, Ind. (150/97); Brighton Chapel near Howe, Ind. (149/168); and St. James, Md. (288/252).

The "why" secret

Obviously, these churches consider World Relief to be important. So the first question I asked them was "*Why* does your congregation consider the ministry of World Relief to be important?"

The answer from the Stockton Brethren Church said it well:

> We consider World Relief to be the ideal vehicle to deliver the gifts we wish to give to the most needy people in the world. First of all World Relief has an evangelical message that accompanies its help, and World Relief also has the blessing of our denomination. This is accompanied by the organization and "know-how" for determining the need and then distributing available resources to meet the need. We have high confidence that whatever we give will be delivered in the name of Jesus to the most strategic place in the most efficient way.

The answer from the Saint James Church touched on some of the same points:

> World Relief is the one best way we have of helping people largely in the Third World with physical needs. Further, we are encouraged that World Relief is administered through missionaries and mission efforts, so we like the idea of helping in the context of the gospel witness.

Brighton Chapel's answer took a little different point of view:

> We look at World Relief as just another important aspect of a well-rounded missions program. It meets certain needs and areas that we as a church cannot reach.

The "how" secret

I'm sure that Brethren in many other churches would agree with these answers and would likewise consider the ministry of World Relief to be very important. But proportionately, their churches do not give as much to World Relief as do these churches. So in an effort to determine what makes the difference, I asked, "How do you explain the high level of giving to World Relief in your church?"

The brief answer from the White Dale Brethren Church got at the core of what the others said:

> We care about others.

The answer from the Stockton Church makes this same general point, then goes on to add some specifics.

> We would attribute the high level of World Relief giving in our church first of all to a concerned and generous congregation. However, the key to the generosity and concern lies largely in the emphasis of our W.M.S. We have consistently been focused on missions and have chosen World Relief as one of our special projects.

The answer from the St. James Church noted the social awareness of this congregation, their responsiveness "to people-needs in many dimensions." But the answer to this question focused mainly on this church's tradition of giving to World Relief and the way this ministry is promoted:

> For us, the program emphasis has a rather lengthy tradition. . . .
>
> We initiate the effort in January of each year and continue the emphasis until mid-March. So, for about six or seven weeks we are in the World Relief emphasis. Each Sunday morning during the campaign, someone from the Outreach Ministry shares a "Word for World Relief," reminding the people of our efforts and encouraging them to keep giving.

A "key" secret

As this answer suggests, ***promotion*** of World Relief seems to be an important key to how well it is supported. So the third question asked specifically how World Relief is promoted in these churches.

The most extensive answer to this question came from the South Bend Church:

> First Brethren Church of South Bend supports World Relief in a variety of ways. We emphasize World Relief during the spring denominational emphasis. We use the banks, bags, and materials that World Relief provides to consider the plight of people in need around the world. During this emphasis we usually show, at a service or a soup dinner, a current World Relief video that de-

scribes the world's conditions and how World Relief is responding to people in need in Jesus' name.

If there are natural disasters in this country or overseas during the year, we call World Relief at 1-800-535-LIFE to make sure that they are helping to provide relief. Almost without exception they inform us that World Relief is already there and beginning to help. Then through the Prayer Chain and bulletin announcements, we encourage our congregation to help meet these disasters with a special contribution to World Relief. (If we failed to make this option available, most of these people would help anyway, but they would channel their contributions through agencies emphasized on TV or radio.)

Our congregation usually emphasizes World Relief before Thanksgiving. It seems appropriate to express our gratitude to God by sharing with those in need.

The Stockton Brethren Church shared these ideas:

> Each spring, usually in March, we have our traditional "soup lunch," at which we collect an offering for World Relief. We do some promotion [of this event] with the bulletin and by oral announcements at church, but probably the most effective method is a personal invitation to friends and family. The excellent reputation of World Relief makes promotion easy.
>
> During the year other groups in the church sometimes contribute to World Relief. Classes take special offerings, young people have special projects, etc. There have been times during disasters that we have had special promotions also. For example, we made little banks from cans for an Ethiopian offering, but usually all we have to do is ask when the need becomes apparent.

In addition to what we learned above about the way the St. James congregation promotes World Relief, this church also noted the following:

> We promote the giving personally, by posters in hallways, inserts (from World Relief) in bulletins, sometimes by a video from WRC, and by bulletin announcements.
>
> We also make special appeals when the need arises: Midwest Flood, Hurricane Andrew, etc.

This congregation has also found the little gunny sack offering bags that World Relief supplies to be a quite popular method of collecting the World Relief offering.

Surprisingly, Brighton Chapel, which has averaged over 300 percent of its Fair Share during the last four years, said, "We do not have any special World Relief emphasis." But the church does budget its full Fair Share for World Relief each year. And the Woman's Missionary Society of the church collects an offering each month at its meetings for World Relief, as well as having special garage and bake sales during the year to raise money for World Relief.

Last Year's "Great Givers"

According to percentage of Fair Share given*

1.	St. Petersburg	858%
2.	White Dale	463%
3.	Stockton	409%
4.	Teegarden	407%
5.	Mountain View	333%
6.	South Bend	331%
7.	Mulvane	316%
8.	Williamstown	311%
9.	Brush Valley	304%
10.	St. James	287%
11.	North Georgetown	268%
12.	Brighton Chapel	255%

*A church's Fair Share equals $6 times its Church Growth Index, which is calculated by adding its membership, average worship attendance, and average Sunday school attendance, then dividing by three.

Top Ten In Total Giving

1.	St. James	$4,856
2.	Jefferson	3,172
3.	Park Street	3,120
4.	Winding Waters	2,897
5.	Brush Valley	2,479
6.	New Lebanon	2,471
7.	Brighton Chapel	2,125
8.	South Bend	2,025
9.	North Manchester	1,695
10.	Warsaw	1,666

Ranking churches according to percentage-giving tends to favor small congregations, since one or two large gifts can make a significant difference. Ranking churches according to total giving, on the other hand, favors larger congregations. Note the four churches on *both* lists: Brighton Chapel, Brush Valley, South Bend, and St. James.

The White Dale Brethren Church, which gave 463 percent of its Fair Share last year, also does not make a big push for World Relief. Offerings are taken when needs arise, with announcement of a coming offering being made a few Sundays prior to the need. But the congregation also may vote to send additional money from its treasury.

Other key secrets

A couple of other keys to great giving surfaced as answers to a general question, "What other thoughts do you have to share on this subject not covered by the questions above."

From South Bend:

> The last and probably the most important reason why South Bend's giving to World Relief seems to be above average is that there are individuals or families in the congregation who believe that God would have them give regularly to World Relief. God has placed upon their hearts the needy people of the world, and we simply provide a channel through which God's love can flow in a tangible way.

And from St. James:

> Our program is helped . . . by setting a goal (e.g., this year's goal is $4,000). That goal is broken down into smaller units (e.g., $20/family for six weeks or a mere $3.33 per family per week, etc.) to enable us to see that our goals are quite reachable.

Summary

What are the secrets of these "great-giving" churches? Here are a few:

- Having a congregation or a group of people in the congregation with a heartfelt concern for those in need is basic.
- Promoting World Relief is important. People must be kept aware of the need and challenged to give.
- Having a W.M.S. group committed to raising money for World Relief is a great asset.
- Putting the full Fair Share in the budget and setting goals for giving are other good ideas.

Which of these secrets can your church use to help it become a "great-giving" congregation? [⇧]

Meetings at McDonald's Make an Impact On Brethren Youth Ministry in Indiana

Elkhart County, Ind. — Who would ever have thought that a McDonald's fast-food restaurant would play a major role in impacting youth ministry in The Brethren Church?

Maybe that famous line, "Do you want fries with that?" evolved from Moses' asking Pharaoh, "Do you want flies with that?" The world may never know. What we do know is that a desire for food and fellowship paved the way for Christian ministry.

Since the winter of 1993, the associate pastors for youth/education from the Brethren churches in Elkhart County (Elkhart, Goshen, Jefferson, Milford, Nappanee, and Winding Waters) have been meeting periodically at McDonald's to spend time together. During these meetings we would share the joys and sorrows we have encountered in our ministries. We would also spend time sharing ideas and encouraging one another in our work.

Having decided that there is more to life than eating those incredible fries, we decided to start pooling our efforts and our resources in order to provide events for our youth which none of us could provide alone. While we have only achieved moderate success, many good things have happened over the past year. Our youth have enjoyed two lock-ins (including a tent-camping event inside the Goshen First Brethren Church building), an all-night fundraiser for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation (how many x's can *you* draw?), a concert of prayer, and a "See You at the Party" outreach event.

Each event has drawn a large turnout of youth. We look forward to the day when most of our youth are attending these events. We have some other ideas stored in a holding pattern under our prayer hats. In the near future we would like to begin sponsoring an Elkhart County version of "The Loft," and we are considering sponsoring a major Christian concert.

Maybe it's the fat in the burgers; or perhaps it's the "Cool, let's do it" attitude of youth pastors; or more likely it's God at work in our lives; but we truly believe there is nothing we can't do by pulling together. Our prayer is that we might make a significant impact on the Brethren youth in Elkhart County. With God's direction, we will!

— Billy Hesketh,
Pastor of Children and Youth Ministry,
Jefferson Brethren Church, Goshen, Ind.



***Goshen, Ind.** — A youth choir was recently added to the music program of the Goshen First Brethren Church. Roberta Wilfong, who directs the choir, motivates the children to sing from their hearts so that others can see their love for Jesus.*

The children enjoy their Wednesday evening practices and were excited about their first performance in February, when they sang a snappy version of "This Little Light of Mine." They sang for the congregation again on March 6, this time presenting the song "Itty Bitty Baby." The children sing with enthusiasm, and the congregation has enjoyed their performances and looks forward to the continuation of this ministry.

— reported by Anna Bollinger, Public Relations Committee chair.



Team Leaders and Members Announced for Short-Term Missions Trip

Ashland, Ohio — Team leaders and members have been announced for this summer's Short-Term Missions trip to Juarez, Mexico.

Team leaders will be Jeff Gilmer, associate pastor of the Flora, Ind., First Brethren Church; Jennifer Thomas, a middle-school teacher in Canton, Ohio, and a 1993 graduate of Ashland University, where she made a short-term missions trip to Mexico as a part of HOPE Fellowship; and Kurt Stout, a student at Ashland Theological Seminary from Burlington, Ind.

Team members will include Amber Corbitt of Edinburg, Va.; Tawna Galbreath from South Bend, Ind.; Michelle Mathews of Nappanee, Ind.; Katie Shepherd from Dublin, Ohio; Sarah Cramer from Goshen, Ind.; Christiana Godefrin from Sarasota, Fla.; Beth Schwartzwalder of Ashland, Ohio; and Christy Van Duyne, also from Ashland.

The team will spend a week serving at a Youth With A Mission center in Juarez, Mexico. They will spend the week ministering to children, participating in work projects, doing street evangelism, helping with worship services, and giving puppet presentations.

The missions trip is being sponsored by the Leadership Development Commission of The Brethren Church, the University Church, Park Street Brethren Church, and the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church.

Ohio District Conference Held March 12 In New Sanctuary of Gretna Church

Bellefontaine, Ohio — Many Ohio Brethren got their first opportunity to see the beautiful new (just over a year old) sanctuary of the Gretna Brethren Church on Saturday, March 12, when the Gretna congregation hosted the Ohio District Conference.

Appropriately, the conference opened Saturday morning with a worship service in that new sanctuary. Following an organ/piano prelude by Peg Swonguer and Paula Deardurff, Gretna Pastor Lynn Mercer read from God's word and prayed, then welcomed those attending the conference.

Special music was presented by Wellspring, a women's trio (Deanna Hauk, Phyllis Jerviss, and Mary Hess) from the Gretna Church, and Nancy Beatty, also from Gretna, led the conference in singing. The inspirational message for the service was given by the district moderator-elect, Rev. Jim Koontz, pastor of the Lousiville First Brethren Church. Rev. Koontz presented a message on the blessings, power, and cords of unity (*see pages 7 and 8 of this issue*). At the conclusion of his message, Rev. Koontz made three recommendations for achieving greater unity in the Ohio District: (1) that the district develop three-year themes, with yearly subthemes contributing to the accomplishment of these themes; (2) that the executive committee of the district become visionary in setting short- and long-term goals that would unite the churches of the district in common action; and (3) that the leaders of local churches within the district prayerfully seek ways to foster the unity of Christ with other district churches. Rev. Koontz plans to follow up on these recommendations during his year as moderator.

Following the worship service, the conference moderator, Rev. Jim Rowsey, pastor of the Smithville Brethren Church, led the 101 delegates present (35 elders, 66 lay) in conducting the conference's business.

Treasurer Stanley Gentle reported district income for 1993 of $55,211 and disbursements of $53,831. He noted that United Financial Program giving for 1993 was the lowest in recent years and about $2,000 less than in 1992. Less than half ($32,838) of the full apportionment ($69,493) was received, with just eight of the district's 20 established churches (not including a "class" and a "mission congregation," which are not assigned an apportionment) paying their full apportionment, with another eight paying nothing.

Statistician Dorman Ronk reported that the district had a net gain in membership in 1993 of 205. Average Sunday morning worship attendance, however, went down by 221 (from 3376 in 1992 to 3155), and average Sunday school attendance also went down (by 25).

In the elections, Rev. Lynn Mercer was chosen moderator-elect; Tracy Whiteside is the new secretary, with Missy Cummins her assistant; Stanley Gentle continues as treasurer, with Jeff Whiteside his assistant; and Dorman Ronk was re-elected as statistician.

Reports were received from the four district boards (Christian Education, Ministerial Examining, Missions, and Spiritual Oversight) and from the three auxiliary organizations (W.M.S., Men of Mission, and Elders Association). A report was also given by Dr. Dale Stoffer for a church-planting steering committee that is working in cooperation with the district and national mission boards in planning a new church within easy driving distance of Ashland. He reported that the committee, after considerable survey work, has chosen the south side of Medina as the location for the church-planting effort. He noted that the building of the former Medina Brethren Fellowship will not be used for this new church.

Following a delicious meal (prepared and served by the Gretna women to the 180 people [including children] attending the conference), the business session continued. Moderator Rowsey called attention to a list of district officers and committee members distributed to all delegates, and he suggested that this be used as a prayer list, with Philippians 1:9–11 providing a guide of what to pray for as the list is used.

Rev. David Oligee, pastor of the West Alexandria First Brethren Church, announced that his congregation will hold an open-air camp meeting the weekend of July 22 to 24, and he extended an invitation for Brethren to come, camp, and join in the fellowship.

Following the installation of new officers and board and committee members by Rev. David Cooksey, updates were received from the various denominational ministries of The Brethren Church. The conference then concluded with separate meetings of the three auxiliary groups.

Next year's Ohio District Conference is set for Saturday, March 11, and will be hosted by the Smithville Brethren Church.

— reported by Editor Dick Winfield

World Relief Assists Churches In United Disaster Response To Earthquake-Affected Areas

Los Angeles, Calif. — More than 1,000 homes in the Northridge and North Hollywood areas were visited by volunteers from local churches working with United Christian Response to determine needs and stress levels in these earthquake-affected communities.

World Relief of the National Association of Evangelicals has been assisting United Christian Response (UCR) by helping mobilize churches for this united response, by helping to determine meaningful ways churches can respond, and by providing training so that trauma counseling services can continue.

Volunteers, wearing yellow United Christian Response shirts, were greeted enthusiastically by residents, some of whom even offered financial donations to the cause because they appreciated the work the churches were doing. "There's been a lot of interest in the stress management workshops that the churches are offering folks," said George Mbulo, coordinator of UCR. More than 100 volunteers and earthquake victims attended two workshops that churches had held, and more workshops are expected.

"One woman attending a recent stress education class said, 'I would never normally darken the door of your church, but what you're doing for the community brought me here,'" related Terry L. Inman, pastor of North Hollywood First Assembly of God Church.

Some families, needing help in filling out FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) applications, are reportedly being exploited by groups charging $500 for assistance. UCR is offering free help in completing the forms. UCR is also putting together care packets for families that need food and clothing. "Some of these families were having problems before the earthquake but now thing are intensified," Mbulo said. Perhaps this will lead to another type of ministry for some churches.

"These door-to-door assessments are turning out to be a powerful tool for churches in making direct contacts with the community," said Bas Vanderzalm, World Relief's director for international ministries.

From The Grape Vine



"A Day Apart," a day of prayer by the Ohio District and members of the Ashland Theological Seminary community will be held April 23 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the seminary. The Spiritual Formation Commission of The Brethren Church is sponsoring this day of quiet prayer and reflection, which will be led by commission members Mary Ellen Drushal, Carolyn Cooksey, and Jerry Flora.

The **Guards**, a fifth- and sixth-grade Awana Bible Quizzing team at the Nappanee, Ind., First Brethren Church, was runner-up in the Indiana State quizzing finals held recently. Members of the team were sixth graders Abby Sensenbaugh, Amy Hughes, and Hillary Kupke, and fifth graders Erica Cromer and Kim Yoder. Since 1991 the quizzing program at the Nappanee Church has grown from one 3-girl team to three teams with a total of 15 members and one state runner-up trophy.

Dr. Juan Carlos Miranda has submitted to the executive committee of the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church his resignation as Director of Latin America Missions. This will become effective August 15, following General Conference. Dr. and Mrs. (María) Miranda plan to move to Columbia, S.C., where Juan will join the faculty of Columbia International University Graduate School of Missions. Juan said, "For many years we have prayed that if it was God's will, I would like to dedicate the later years of my life to teaching at an academic institution."

Brethren Army Chaplain Dan DeVeny has been reassigned to the United States following almost three years of service in Germany. Dan, wife Ann, and daughter Aubrey are now at the Ft. Eustis Army Base in Virginia.

June 25 has been set as **"A Day to Change the World."** On that day, up to 30 percent (160 million on six continents) of the world's Christians are expected to spend time in prayer together over a 24-hour period, with a special emphasis on praying for unreached peoples and nations. Major cities around the world will host concerts of prayer, marches for Jesus, and other activities. An outline of prayer activities for this day can be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to Global Harvest Ministries, 215 N. Marengo Ave., Suite 151, Pasadena, CA 91101.

Bryan BYIC Groups Host Parent Appreciation Dinner

Bryan, Ohio — The Junior, Junior High, and Senior High Brethren Youth in Christ (BYIC) groups of the Bryan First Brethren Church joined forces on February 20 to host a Parent Appreciation Dinner.

Upon their arrival for the dinner, parents were escorted to tables in the church fellowship hall, which had been transformed into an Italian restaurant. Tables lighted by candles were covered with red and white checkered table cloths, while balloons and a sparkle light added a festive atmosphere.

BYIC members, dressed in black pants and white shirts, served a meal of salad, spaghetti and meatballs, bread sticks, and ice cream to the 30 parents present. Andrew Stever, Ellen Kotowski, Susan Kotowski, and Christina Brown provided entertainment. Babysitting was provided for toddlers and pre-schoolers so that parents could enjoy a quiet dinner together.

The parents enjoyed the evening and appreciated the efforts of the children to provide this special dinner for them.

— reported by Linda Lockhart, cor. sec.



Members of the Bryan Junior, Junior High, and Senior BYIC groups take time out from hosting their Parent Appreciation Dinner to pose for a picture.

A Lifetime of Service

Wheaton, Ill. — Mrs. Betty Linton of Black Mountain, N.C., a missionary for many years in Korea, was honored March 6 at the National Association of Evangelicals Convention as the recipient of World Relief's 15th annual Helping Hands Award.

This award is made annually to a person who has given a lifetime of service to the poor.

Mrs. Linton and her husband, Rev. Hugh Linton, began their ministry in Korea in the 1950s. Serving with the Presbyterian Church, they planted more than 600 churches.

From visits with tuberculosis patients in rural areas of Korea, Mrs. Linton learned that many were too poor or too far away from medical care to seek treatment. So the Lintons began the Soonchun Christian Clinic in 1960.

They also began a ministry to terminally-ill patients. "The Christian witness was strong among these patients," said Mrs. Linton. "They knew their only hope was in the Lord."

In 1984 Rev. Linton was fatally injured in an automobile accident. Because there were no ambulances or trained emergency teams in the area, he died on the way to the hospital. Out of this tragedy, Mrs. Linton led the effort to provide emergency medical services in this region of Korea, calling on her brother, son, and daughter-in-law, all medical doctors, to help train and equip ambulance teams in Korea.

After 41 years of service, Mrs. Linton retired in 1992, but she continues to travel to Korea, where some of her children now serve

In Memory

Virgil McConnell, 79, April 1. Member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church. Services by Associate Pastor Randy Saultz.

Donald L. Grover, 92, February 18. Member of the Hagerstown First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Gerald A. Barr.

Goldenaires

Ora and Ruby Greer, 65th, April 6. Members of the Corinth Brethren Church.

Wedding

Jamie Waldenville to **Duane Knepshield**, March 19, at the Pleasant View Brethren Church; Pastor R. Keith Hensley officiating. Attend the Pleasant View Brethren Church.

Membership Growth

Fremont: 4 by baptism

Valley: 3 by baptism, 1 by transfer

Linwood: 5 by baptism, 1 by transfer

Pleasant View: 2 by baptism, 1 by transfer

Little Crusader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).



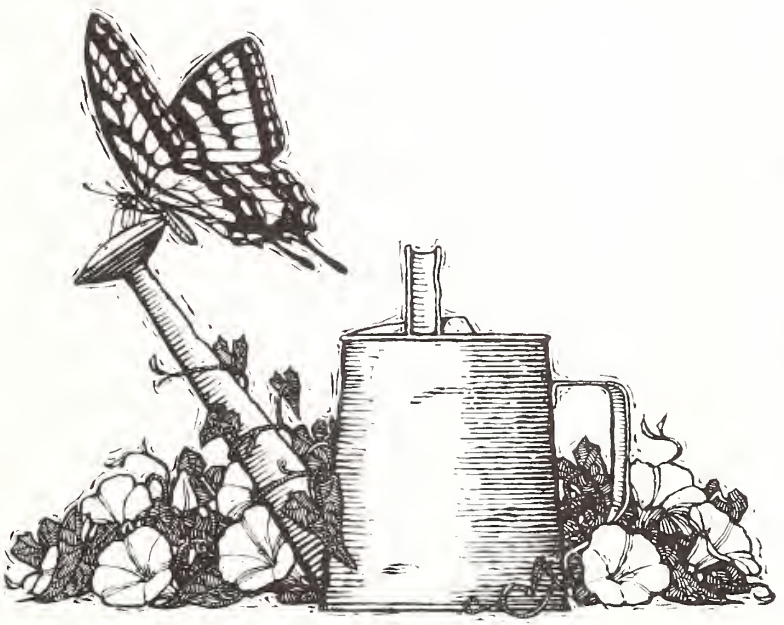
Hi boys and girls!

Have you ever heard of the word *parable*? A *parable* is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. There are 39 different kinds of parables in the Bible. Here is one of my favorites:

A man was walking from Jerusalem to Jericho on a very dangerous road. Suddenly, some thieves caught him and took his clothing and beat him until he was almost dead. Soon a priest came along and saw the man who was very hurt. Instead of stopping and helping the man, the priest crossed to the other side of the road and walked away. Then another man, a Levite who had an important job in his church, saw the wounded man. He, too, crossed to the other side of the road and walked away.

But another man, who was a Samaritan and not very well liked in the community, came upon the helpless man. He felt very sorry for the man, so he bandaged his wounds, put him on his own animal, and took him to the nearest inn. Before he left, he gave the innkeeper two days' pay and told him to take care of the hurt man.

There is a heavenly meaning to this story. Jesus tells us that we are always to be like the good Samaritan. We are to try to help others no matter who they are, even if they don't go to our church, or if they don't look like us, or even if they don't act the way we do. So whenever you see someone with a need, remember to be like the good Samaritan!



Find the following words in the word box below.

Samaritan Jericho
thieves wounds
priest Levite
innkeeper

B	W	H	I	O	R	C	J	L	I	I	Y
C	O	A	I	N	N	K	E	E	P	E	R
R	U	P	O	F	N	R	R	L	I	S	T
V	N	W	Y	B	P	R	I	E	S	T	M
M	D	T	S	M	O	L	C	V	Y	I	K
W	S	C	H	J	T	G	H	I	L	M	O
W	F	U	I	J	L	F	O	T	R	D	S
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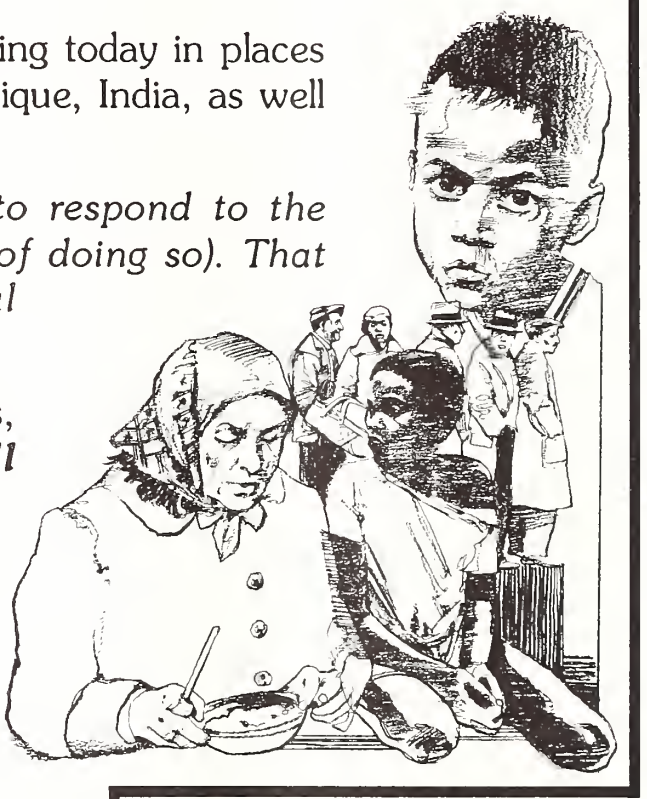
Answer the following questions.

1. Who is our neighbor? _____
   _____
2. How should we treat our neighbor? _____
   _____
   _____

Hear Their Desperate Cry for Help

If you close your ear to the cry of the poor,
you will cry out and not be heard.

Proverbs 21:13, *NRSV*



Hundreds of thousands of people are suffering today in places like Sudan, Croatia, Haiti, Cambodia, Mozambique, India, as well as in parts of our own country.

As Christians, we have a responsibility to respond to the suffering of others (as well as the privilege of doing so). That is why The Brethren Church has an annual World Relief emphasis.

Obviously, as individuals, as local churches, or even as a denomination, we can't help ***all*** who are suffering. But we can help ***some***.

And working together with other individuals, other local churches, and other denominations through World Relief of the National Association of Evangelicals, *we can make a significant difference* in the lives of thousands of men, women, and children.

Your gift this month can bring life and hope to a suffering child or family somewhere in the world. Furthermore, it will serve as a tangible expression of ***Christ's love*** for that child or that family.

Please prayerfully consider how much God would have you give this month to help meet the needs of hungry, suffering people.

Then make your special **Good Samaritan Offering** for World Relief through your local church, or send it directly to:

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Ashland, OH 44805

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THE BRETHREN
Evangelist
MAY 1994





Special events in Brethren churches. See page 3 for explanation of photos and page 15 (top photo), page 16 (photo at left), and page 13 (bottom photos) for Update stories.





Readers' Forum

A column in which readers can share their thoughts and views with the Brethren.

More Thoughts on the Health Care Crisis

WHILE I APPLAUD the willingness of the NAE to adopt a resolution on the health care crisis (THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST, April 1994, p. 2), I am compelled to voice my strong disagreement with two of its components. I believe these components are insensitive and based on poor theological foundations.

The first has to do with penalizing persons for their risky behaviors. "Persons who engage in behavior which adversely affects their health, such as smoking, drug and alcohol abuse, promiscuity and over-eating, should be responsible for the additional medical liability." I am particularly disturbed by the pharisaical selectiveness when naming these "high risk behaviors" (*NAE Insight*). Galatians 5:19–21 identifies a few more that should perhaps be included which put our physical health at risk. Hatred, resentments, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, arguing, and envy. The list of physical consequences for these "high-risk behaviors" includes many gastrointestinal disorders such as ulcers as well as stress-related disorders such as headaches, high blood pressure, lower back pain, insomnia, depression, and anxiety.

In addition, what shall we say to those who don't take care of their bodies by exercising regularly or whose diet is primarily McFat burgers, McFat fries, and McFat muffin sandwiches? Medical science continues to validate the inseparable relationship between our physical, spiritual, and emotional centers. David illustrates this in Psalm 32:3, "When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long."

We have only two choices given our propensity to sin. We can attempt to identify every sin that has an effect on our physical body and assign a cost that would be added to your health insurance premium or co-payment percentage. But wouldn't it be easier to take a lesson from the older ones in John 8:1–11? The fact of the matter is that we continue to sin and that it will continue to affect our physical existence. That was the result of the fall in Eden and that is the result of our sin today. Let us not be like the Pharisees and quickly point out the really bad sins in others and forget to acknowledge our own. I support the deletion of this pharisaic component of the resolution.

The second component I disagree with is NAE's desire "to diligently seek to make health care accessible to all." There is a problem with this that many do not understand. The type of universal access being proposed by conservatives is not an improvement on the current system. Every American today already has that type of universal access—as long as someone is identified to pay for the services! It may be private insurance, the government, the patient, or some combination including raising the prices for other good-paying patients to cover bad debts. We don't need another system for universal access. We need universal coverage for every citizen that can't be taken away—ever! That would be the ethical thing to do.

STEPHEN BARBER
Plymouth, Ind.

Seeing God's Hand at Work

The Night the Boat Got Stuck

By Doris Smith

IT WAS A TORRID summer evening as we put the final touches on an elaborate, yet functional setting for our vacation Bible school. We had finished the Rec Room (meeting room) complete with talking donkey, the Heavenly Music Room, and the Glory Room. Now the Holy Land needed just one more prop.

A long, beautiful boat we had hauled in from the farm sat in the hallway, ready to be carried in and set by the Sea of Galilee (a wall painted azure blue). A fishing net was already draped up, with name tags on colored fishes hooked into the net. It was easy to visualize a teacher sitting in that boat, with excited, bright-eyed, attentive youth sitting around her, absorbed in the lesson.

On a far wall was painted a spectacular Holy City with gleaming gold Dome of the Rock highly visible. Perfect! Now for the boat.

We quickly rounded up several men to carry the boat into the room to complete this Galilee scene. They got the boat to the door and part way in. But then they were stuck. The hall was too narrow and the boat too long to make the corner. Every angle was tried. Suggestions were made resulting in futile attempts. It was late. We were exhausted.

I ran to the sanctuary, fell on my knees, and prayed fervently. My helper, I'm sure, fled to another part of the church likewise to plead for divine assistance.

After a long time we returned to the stressful scene. We arrived in time to see the men finally slipping the boat through the door. They had opened another door to give more angle, and voilà! the boat and the Sea of Galilee were together.

Was it a miracle? Well, when Bible school was over and we were cleaning up, we found out.

Several men used the same ingenuity, the same physical force (even more), and the same angles in their attempts to remove the boat from the room, but to no avail. The boat was too long (as it had always been!). Finally, in frustration, the men removed parts of the boat in order to get it out.

A happy ending: The repaired "Holy Land Boat" was given to some boys living near a lake, who desperately wanted but could not afford a boat. This was a miracle for them too, making it a double miracle! [⇧]

Mrs. Smith is a member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church.

Have you seen the hand of God at work in your life in miraculous ways or in answer to prayer? If so, share your story in the EVANGELIST so that others can be blessed by your experience.

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How the writer gained a new perspective on death.

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An account of a recent mission trip the author made to Great Britain.

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A look at misconceptions that have caused some people to reject the historic peace position of The Brethren Church.

"Call Your First Witness" *by Dale Foreman* 9
Christians must be willing to take the stand for what is right.

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The third of three articles on mottoes that have served as summaries of our basic beliefs about Scripture.

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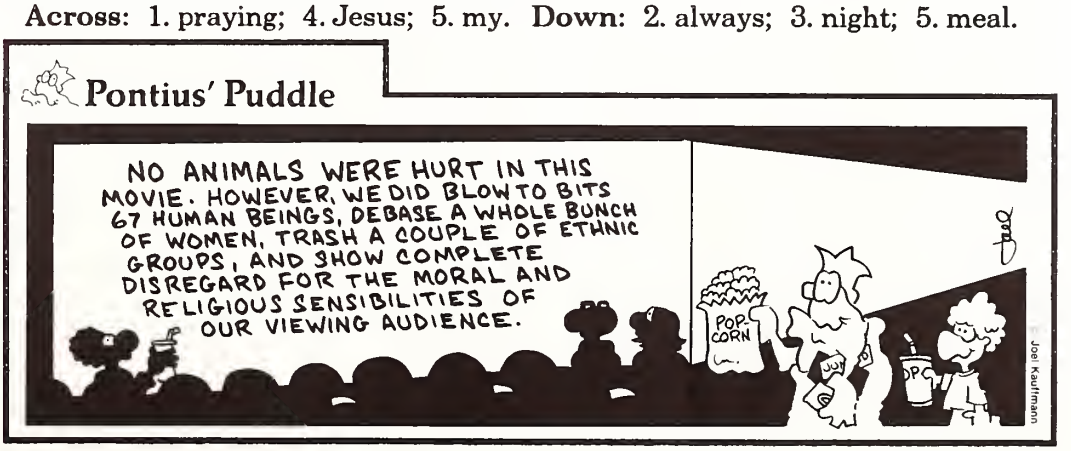
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The May–June *Woman's Outlook Newsletter* is in the center of this issue.

Cover: Top photo, portrayal of the Last Supper at the Wayne Heights Brethren Church (see page 15). Middle photo, tables set for Passover (Seder) observance at the Wabash First Brethren Church (see page 16). Bottom photos, groundbreaking (right photo) for a new Family Life Center at the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, and (left photo) Kaley Halblaub inspects the ground that was broken.

Answers to the Little Crusader page:
Across: 1. praying; 4. Jesus; 5. my. **Down:** 2. always; 3. night; 5. meal.





The Portrait

By Bonnie Lowery

A PICTURE appears in my mind, painted in the halls of memory. It's a portrait—colors still fresh and vivid—the likeness of a precious friend. I see her hair, gathered back and captured in a knot, time having combed it white. I see her once-smooth skin, now weathered and spotted, with lines around her eyes and mouth. I see her eyes, their color faded and cloudy. I see her body, bent and rigid, causing the pain I see written on her face.

But more than these things, I see what the years could not steal—her smile, her kindness, her gentleness, her understanding, her love. I see her joy in spite of pain. I see her determination and her willingness to give. And I see her tears, tears of intercession spilling into her lap as she prays for the lost, the sick, and the hurting. Seeing her, I see Jesus.

But now Death's Gallery mocks me. It relentlessly distorts and destroys the precious, priceless beauty by covering the canvass with colors of darkness.

I didn't expect this. Nobody ever told me that growing up meant growing old. Youth doesn't know that it's not immortal. It doesn't know that tomorrows are weighed and that some get ounces and others get pounds. It doesn't know that someday the cup of life will be emptied of its contents.

I want to look away. What brought this into focus? I had hidden it away on the last page of my awareness, and I wasn't going to turn to that page for a long, long time. But today I'm looking, feeling, aching. As the pain of loss threatens to overwhelm me, I frantically cry out, "Please, Lord, please walk this corridor with me! Tell me the Truth, Lord, before the paint dries forever!"

Waiting for an answer

I wait for an answer. Each morning I wait, listening and sitting in silence, knowing I must get quiet to hear His voice. Still aching, I rise and begin walking with Him through the pages of His word. I feel His hand upon the shoulder of my thoughts as He gently leans over to take a sentence and lift it up. It was there in my yesterdays, but I didn't see it.

He says, "Precious in my sight is the death of my saints." The colors begin to reappear as He peels away the darkness. He continues: "When she died, I stood to receive her into heaven's embrace." I gaze in awe as I move to view the canvass from another angle.

As He speaks, His light shines upon features I'd forgotten: "She's home now, and free. She's running, bounding through fields fragrant with flowers. She's wading in the streams of heaven, and the water laps pure and clean upon those once-callused feet. Her eyes are clear and sparkling as she looks upon My smile. Her ears hear the music of Love's melody. Her voice joins in harmony with My prayer for you that your faith may not fail—my prayer for you and for the church and for those who are yet afar off."

I bask in His warmth and light while He completes the picture. As He prepares to place the portrait on the mantel of my heart, He applies one more brush stroke, one final, radiant touch . . . the victorious truth, "She lives!" [⇧]

Mrs. Lowery is an administrative assistant in the Professional Development Department at Ashland University. She attends the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church.

Heaven Grows Closer

Mother dear, since you have gone to stay
In that bright land so far away;
Because you now have led the way,
Heaven grows closer to me each day.

No more will I see the gray hair of your head
Nor watch you lying sick abed.
Because you, dear one, have led the way
Now heaven draws closer to me each day.

You have rejoined old friends and kin
Who beckon me in twilight dim.
Because you, Mom, have led the way
Heaven comes closer to me each day.

And our Savior you now can greet,
May even be there at His feet!
Why yes, Mom, you have led the way;
Now heaven draws closer to me each day.

Mom, I have changed since you went away.
I'll never think of you in the same old way.
Because, you see, you've led the way
And heaven grows closer to me each day.

Written by Edna J. Aaron in memory of her mother, Frances Copp Harrison, who passed away on February 11, 1994. Mrs. Harrison was a member of the Washington, D.C., Brethren Church from its inception 52 years ago until her death.

A Wide-Open Door To England and Scotland

By Dave Hoyt

SURPRISES and opportunities are very much a part of life. That was how I felt when a door of opportunity opened wide for me in January of this year to serve on a short-term outreach mission to England and Scotland.

The invitation to make this mission trip came through friends in England, several churches there, and a Christian Trust based in Selsdon, England, called Deo Gloria (To the Glory of God). My final decision to take the trip was made when my church family at the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church affirmed my call and sent me off with its full prayer support.

A privilege and an honor

During both the planning and the carrying out of this mission in Great Britain, the privilege and honor of representing Jesus Christ stood out to me. He opened doors for me to minister in a variety of settings, and prayer played a huge part from start to finish.

From the outset I experienced difficulties simply getting out of the U.S. because of the snow and ice blanketing the northeast. My London flight, after many delays, was canceled at midnight, and I spent the night in the airport. The next morning I was bussed to another airport, and finally I was on my way to England!

My good friend, Chris Frampton, met me at the airport in London and took me to his home in Old Coulsdon, a suburb of London, where he provided me a room and a base of operations. Chris also introduced me to a number of his non-Christian friends, who are searching for meaning in life and have many questions. We shared lively discussions—with Jesus Christ always at center stage—and their interest in spiritual life grew.



Between engagements, my visits with Chris's friends continued to fill my days, as we shared meals and time together. We talked about evil and suffering, world religions, Jesus Christ, and God. As I responded to their questions, they asked me to show them where these answers were found in the Bible.

On my first Friday in England (January 21st), I was invited to be the guest speaker for a youth night in Croyden, Surrey with some 175 youth ages 12–22 in attendance. The worship, led by a local youth worship team, was very inspiring!

A visit to a prison

On Sunday morning we set out for one of England's old prisons called Maidstone, which dates back several hundred years. This prison houses about 500 prisoners, many of whom committed serious crimes. I was the speaker for the Protestant worship service. The response of the inmates to my message was very open. Some prayed to receive Christ, and others asked for prayer. We visited one-on-one with them as long as they were allowed to stay. We felt a strong connection in God's Spirit and knew that we were being strengthened by the Spirit as we proclaimed Jesus Christ's lordship to these men and as we passed on a message of hope. Chris and I were also asked by Chaplain Ed Ghinn and the inmates to return for an evening Bible study the next week.

Later that day Chris took me to Purley Baptist Church, where I was scheduled to share in their evening worship service. This good-sized church building was filling rapidly as we entered. We were ushered to a prayer room, where we met the pastor and other church leaders and spent time in prayer.

Support through prayer

I learned that during the service I was going to be interviewed by the pastor. During that interview, I focused on the transforming power of Jesus Christ and told a little about Park Street Brethren Church in Ashland. I also gave some details about the short-term mission in which I was engaged, so that they could be better informed in order to support us in prayer. A number of people came up afterwards to ask questions or to chat. Many expressed their appreciation and promised prayer support for us as our mission trip continued.

I spent Tuesday preparing for the evening Bible study at Maidstone prison. That night we met with a committed core of prisoners who made up the Bible study group. Worship led to prayer and then to a time of study and discussion. Our focus was on "God's Commitment to Parenting Us." Time flew

---

Dave Hoyt is Pastor of Youth Discipleship at the Park Street Brethren Church in Ashland, Ohio. He made the mission trip described in this article from January 17 to February 3, 1994.

by! Even after the closing prayer, the prisoners lingered with us as long as the guards would allow, asking questions and making additional requests for prayer. One prisoner put a number of Bible bookmarks in my hand and said, "Please remember us!"

I was again reminded of the privilege of representing Jesus Christ. I reflected on Matthew chapter 25, realizing again its reality! In dark, dreary, lonely, and needy settings, Jesus Christ is present.

We spent most of the next day (Wednesday, January 26) at Deo Gloria Christian Trust, joining them for their weekly prayer meeting that afternoon. Deo Gloria Christian Trust provides follow-up help for new Christians across Great Britain, prints outreach literature, has a cult and occult department to counter this influence, helps train lay-preachers, and assists the body of Christ in England in a variety of other ways.

A visit to York

The next morning we caught a train that took us to the city of York in Northern England. Trains in England are clean and modern. We enjoyed a long but scenic trip through rolling green hills and farmlands. As we traveled, we often visited with other passengers and took advantage of opportunities to share our faith in Christ.

In York we had the opportunity to do some sightseeing. I was able to capture some of the uniqueness of the area on video as we toured the city and climbed the old Roman walls that surround the center of town. We enjoyed walking the old stone streets and viewing architecture from centuries gone by, including Yorkminster Cathedral, which took several hundred years to build. Talk about a building program commitment!

At the bed and breakfast where we stayed, I overheard a young German man being fed spiritualistic error by the owner, as she described the supposed wonders of several gurus. My heart began to pound as I heard God's Spirit telling me to speak up for Jesus Christ. I said, "I couldn't help but overhear your conversation and wanted to ask if you would permit me to share what brought me into a direct relationship to God?" They both agreed, and I shared through personal experience and from the word of God how I had found Jesus Christ to be the direct way to salvation from God.

I appealed to them: "It is only through Christ's shed blood that we can find forgiveness for our sins, and it is only through God's Savior and Messiah, Jesus Christ, that we can find ultimate Truth



and a personal relationship with God. This is the gift of God to everyone who will receive Jesus Christ, His Son!" The response was not overwhelmingly positive from the woman, who was into her gurus, but the young German man came to me afterwards and thanked me. I knew a seed had been sown.

North to Scotland

Following our visit to York, we headed farther north to Scotland. Again the train ride was inspiring as the rolling hills grew larger. Soon we were in Scotland, where the high green hills dotted with sheep, the old stone farm buildings, the stone fences, and the rivers and streams running through the farms gave the landscape a picture-postcard quality.

Traveling by train continued to afford us many opportunities to visit with and witness to other travelers. Later that day we had a mix-up about the stop where Chris's brother, Charles, was going to meet us. We got off about 80 miles from where we were supposed to, and had to rush to board another train. We barely made it to our next engagement in time, arriving in Perth, Scotland, a little less than a half an hour before we were due at a Christian rally. Whew!

A vision for outreach

Upon our arrival in Perth, Charles whisked us off to Perth Christian Center, where those praying for the meeting were just finishing their prayer time. I could sense a strong spiritual dynamic at work in this body of Scottish Christians. Soon the building was filling up with people, and you could see that Christians had brought many unchurched people with them. These believers seemed to have a strong vision for outreach.

The worship was lively and joy filled the air! The combined prayers of my prayer-supporters in the U.S.A. and of the Christians at the center made it so. There is nothing like being in the center of God's will, but even so the thought of speaking to this growing crowd made my heart pound. Fortunately, the praise time and a few special testimonies helped acclimate me before I was invited to speak.

During the preliminaries I had asked the sound technician, "What was this building used for prior to becoming Perth Christian Center?" He replied, "Headquarters of a liquor distributing company." This was a useful bit of information and provided me with an illustration of God's ability to transform our lives and even the physical situations around us.

The entire evening seemed charged with the Holy Spirit! Following the message, many asked for prayer, some prayed to receive Jesus Christ as their Lord, and a large group stayed, visited, and prayed until about 11:00 p.m.

About 11:15 p.m. the pastor asked me, "Are you ready for tomorrow?" I asked, "For what?" He said, "For preaching the morning service." I was shocked and honored at the same time, but I felt that I should go for it since that's what the pastor was counting on.

Returning to my hotel room, I was exhausted, but it was a good kind of exhaustion. As I drifted off to sleep I was praying, "Help, Lord! Give me the words and the direction you want me to take." He led

me to preach on the "Heart of God for the Lost."

That Sunday morning some 40 people came early for prayer, and as the day progressed it was obvious that their prayers made a huge difference. Throughout the praise and worship time and during a Communion service that was followed by more worship, the imprint of the Almighty's Holy Spirit was evident. Again people stayed long after the message, visiting and ministering to one another in prayer.

A jam-packed day

As the afternoon progressed and we were still together, the youth leader asked me if I would lead the evening youth meeting. I agreed, but I could tell that it was going to be a jam-packed day, since we would be leaving soon for Castle Huntley, a youth reformatory, where we had been invited to give a talk at the Protestant worship service.

In a few minutes four of us were on our way to meet with the chaplain of Castle Huntley at his home. Other workers joined us there for prayer, including the area director of Prison Fellowship. From the chaplain's house we went to the reformatory—which stood on the horizon like a dark medieval castle—where we were guided to a newer set of buildings and finally to a relatively small room designated for our use. I was invited to address the group, and I spoke on "How God Remakes an Out-of-Control Life."

The young prisoners had a lot of good questions, typical of the Scottish people I had met to date. As they huddled around me, it was obvious that they were sincere in their spiritual questions; but it was also clear that they were eager to speak to an American. These were tough street kids with a thick Scottish brogue. Again I was reminded of the great privilege of representing Jesus Christ and glad for the ongoing ministry at Castle Huntley Reformatory.

On our way back into Perth, we were dropped off for a supper hosted by two members of the church. Then we were off to the evening youth meeting—"The Rock"—with a newly formed youth group. It was a joy to be with these young believers as we sensed God's hand of grace pouring out His blessings on them.

Somewhere in this time frame I remembered the difficulty I had had getting plane tickets sorted out and the delays I'd experienced in getting out of the U.S.A. because of the weather. Obstacles are often a part of mission endeavors, as Satan seeks to keep the gospel from getting out. We must press on in spite of these obstacles, because we have been given a ministry of representing God and of making salvation in Jesus Christ known to a world in need (2 Cor. 16–21).



The next morning Chris and I joined Charles for breakfast, and then we were off to see two outreach buses we had heard about called the "Challenger 1 and 2." On both of these beautifully-maintained double-decker buses, the walls of the lower decks were covered with contemporary pictures on large panels telling the story of salvation. The upper decks were fitted with seats and a large V.C.R., to use in showing outreach and basic foundational teaching clips.

A divine appointment

After our tour of the buses, we caught a train heading for London, with a short stopover in Edinburgh. The train was crowded, so we had to split up. I ended up sitting next to Stephen, a young scientist. This encounter proved to be one more of those "divine appointments."

Stephen, well-educated and well-mannered, was interested in society and religion and in sharing ideas. As we talked, he said, "I feel as though I'm at a crossroads in life spiritually. I do believe in God, because I know this world was created by order. I also believe in miracles and feel that a person who has no faith in God has little hope. And this world is a dreadful place if you don't have hope!" Nevertheless, religion still baffled him, even though he grew up in the church. We continued to visit, and in time he asked me how I had come to faith in God.

"God must have sent you"

There are times when we may feel that our testimony of coming to faith in Jesus Christ is not very important, but it can have great impact. After I shared my search for truth and explained the basics of salvation, Stephen said, "I don't believe we are talking by chance. I have just recently started going to church, and I'm engaged to a girl who is a committed Christian whose parents are missionaries in Kenya. God must have sent you!"

I was again excited to be in God's perfect will, sowing the truth of Jesus Christ. Before Stephen left the train in Northern England, I gave him some Christian literature to read. He thanked me, and I knew that God's Holy Spirit, who had arranged this meeting, would continue to minister to him.

Great Britain has a special place in my heart for a number of reasons. One of these is its great Christian heritage of church leaders, evangelists, theologians, and mission organizations, which impacted Christendom and faithfully carried the gospel to the far reaches of our globe over the centuries. A second reason is because I was privileged to see the country close up over a four-year period while serving with a Christian mission team in the past.

There is much to admire about this land. But it is also a country that has experienced spiritual decline and which needs our prayer and our mission support. As I completed my short-term mission trip in January, I was thankful for the strong blanket of prayer support I received from my church family during this mission endeavor. I was also thankful for the wide-open door to minister in England and Scotland and for the privilege of representing Jesus Christ. [⇧]

What's Wrong With Being a Peace Church?

By Chantal Logan

WHEN I FIRST HEARD about The Brethren Church, I was excited to learn that it was a "peace church." Growing up in Europe, I had been dismayed at how Christian churches throughout history had preached love on the one hand but had rallied to the cause of war on the other. Many of my contemporaries thought that this flagrant inconsistency proved not only that the church was hypocritical, but that the message of salvation could not be taken seriously.

I was very happy, therefore, to know that at least one church upheld the standards of the gospel in times of war as well as in times of peace. Yet, when I spoke to Brethren people, I soon learned that most of them were not pacifists. Actually, not only did these people not see Christ's teachings about peace as vital to the faith, but many even cringed at the idea of the Brethren denomination being called a "peace church." Pacifism, if not a bad word, was at least an embarrassing one in Brethren circles. The Brethren peace position was often referred to as a "historic position" in a seeming attempt to make non-violence a thing of the past, irrelevant to today's world.

An ambiguous position

The Brethren statement on peace, adopted some ten years ago, reflects the church's ambiguity on this issue. Most people in the church today do not seem to see the immense value or the biblical basis of holding an unequivocal position for peace.

As we are living in times when the threat of war is still very great, with violence on the increase, I think it is important for The Brethren Church to examine its beliefs and to dispel its misgivings and misunderstandings about peace. This is necessary to the church if it is to remain faithful to its God-given call.

The first thing that needs to be clarified is that the historic peace position of The Brethren Church has nothing to do with political ideologies. It has nothing to do with liberals or conservatives, left-wing or right-wing politics, communism or fascism. It does not even have much to do with pacifism, as we often think of it today.

A matter of obedience

Brethren opposition to war is solely a matter of obedience to biblical teaching, an application of radical discipleship to all of life. "Non-resistance," as the Brethren called it, influences all areas of our lives. It calls us to love and not to retaliate against our private enemies as well as our corporate or national enemies. It is to be practiced in times of peace as well as in times of war. It is to be lived within the borders of one's church and also outside the borders of one's country. Actually, loving one's enemies does not exclude anyone. It cuts across racial, social, and political barriers.

As a consequence, the Brethren refused to participate in war or to use violence against their enemies, not because they naively thought that this would bring an end to war or conflict, but simply because they wanted to obey the commandments of Jesus Christ. Because religious practices do have political consequences, the practice by the Brethren of non-resistance did lead to their being labeled "pacifists" and to their practice being called "pacifism." Yet in their own eyes, their way of peace was simply faithfulness to the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount.

In contrast to others, who have tried throughout history to do away with the new commandments of Jesus, the Brethren did not water them down. Brethren did not add any "but," "if," or "and." They just assumed that if Christ told them to love their enemies, they should do just that, no matter what the consequences might be. Perhaps Brethren were not sophisticated enough to rationalize themselves out of following Christ's commands or to believe that they could be Christian without practicing what Jesus preached. Perhaps they just refused to be hypocrites.

So what is wrong with that? What can be embarrassing about Christians taking the message of the gospel seriously? What can be wrong with being biblical, not only in word but also in deed? Why would we want to relegate such a courageous and valuable stand to the past? Is it ignorance or misunderstanding? Or is it perchance an unwillingness to pay the cost?

Incorrect associations

Undoubtedly, misunderstanding has played an important role in turning off many Brethren from anything remotely related to the issue of "pacifism." Many people associate being a "pacifist" with stereotypes of long-haired hippies and draft-dodgers burning their draft cards or desecrating the flag. Others, caught up in the hype of the cold-war mentality, saw "pacifists" as communist sympathizers playing into the hands of the Soviet Union. This kind of reaction occurs when people do not distinguish between the interests of the church and the interests of the state (a separate issue that may be discussed at another time).

But as we have seen, the Brethren position was not politically motivated. In religious circles, anyone taking a stand for peace (except through strength) comes under suspicion of being a "theological liberal." Since Brethren naturally align themselves with the "conservative" camp because of their understanding of Scripture, they were easily swept up in the strong wind of the evangelical movement. They adopted many of its positions, even those that ran contrary to Brethren tradition, without exercising the discernment a 250-year-old church ought to possess.

Mrs. Logan, a former Brethren missionary, is a member of the Bethlehem Brethren Church, Harrisonburg, Va. Her homeland is France. She currently serves on a Brethren peace task force.

Brethren failed to see that there was more to evangelicalism than theology. There was also an endorsement of political and social agendas that reflected more the partisan politics of the time than the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Fortunately, the evangelical movement is coming to maturity and is beginning to realize it should not be identified with any political movement. But in the meantime, this political evangelicalism antagonized whole segments of American society who now refuse even to look at the claims of Jesus Christ because they equate being "born again" with being "right wing." The Brethren, with their long-held peace tradition, should have been able to avoid this pitfall, and also to have warned others against it.

Is it, then, a fear of being labeled liberal that embarrasses the Brethren away from an unequivocal peace position? Or is there still some other misunderstanding that needs to be dispelled? I hope no one thinks that to hold a peace position means you have to hate or reject all people who are or have been in the military. Doing so, of course, is the very antithesis of any Christian peace position and would be hypocritical.

My experience has taught me that some of the people most convinced of the evil of war are the veterans who themselves fought in past wars. In contrast to those who have seen war and violence only on television from the comfort of a reclining chair, those who have experienced war first hand know there is nothing good or glorious about it. It is frightening to think that young people today see the horrors of war only as a great adventure on a giant video screen.

There is nothing pretty about killing human beings, whether it is done in self-defense or under orders while wearing a uniform. Making killing look fun or glamorous is certainly a sin for which our society is going to have to pay a high price (if we are not already doing so).

Our greatest stumbling block

Have all the misunderstandings been dispelled? Is it time to be honest with ourselves and look at what may be our greatest stumbling block to teaching non-resistance today? Could it be that we just don't want to pay the price of living by the way of peace? Have we become so worldly, so attached to our possessions that we are willing to kill in order to keep them? Or maybe less dramatically, are we willing to sue a Christian brother so as to maintain our rights or to get what we think we deserve.

Is it God we trust?

We say that we trust in God. But it seems that we entrust the safety of our families to deadly weapons rather than to the mercy and power of the living Christ. If it is true that no one can say what he or she will do in a life-threatening situation, it is also true that our human weakness or lack of faith does not abolish the commandments of Christ. His words still stand for the church to preach and uphold. We are called to re-examine our lives in the light of these commands, not to do away with the commands because of their difficulty.

It is up to us to decide what kind of church we want to be today, a church that values the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, or a church that accommodates its teachings to the theological fads or the political pressures of the day. The call of Christ to radical discipleship is still valid today. Blessed is the church that heeds and preaches that call!

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. [⇧]

"Call Your First Witness"

WE LIVE in an age of great political show trials, involving issues no less significant than the slavery issue of the 1860s. We live in the midst of moral crises—abortion, pornography, nuclear proliferation, genocide, apartheid, euthanasia, epidemics of suicide, AIDS, violence and international terrorism, and outrageous inequities in material well-being. Daily, these issues are tried in the courts, in the press, in the media, and on the streets.

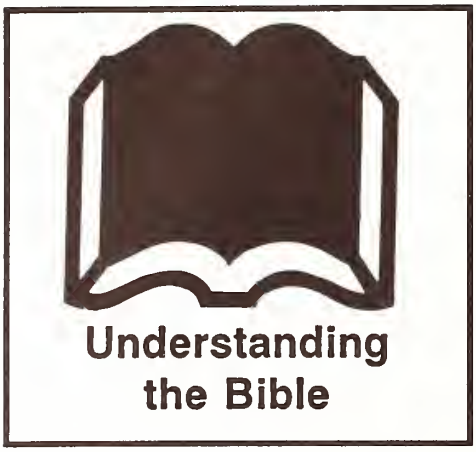
The Christians of the world have many opportunities to participate in these trials, and they know they can offer genuine healing and hope because Jesus, their master, rose from the dead and lives even now. Many, like Peter, will deny that they know Christ. But like infants learning to walk, Christians need to start caring about some issues. This might lead to prayer about those issues. And finally, they may be ready to stand up and take the risk of speaking out in the courtroom of the world—in truth and obedience, just as Jesus did so long ago.

The Christian is called to be a light to the world. One man who understood and acted upon his faith was Joseph of Arimathea. The Apostle Luke tells us that Joseph, a member of the Sanhedrin, objected to the decisions of that court and asked for Jesus' body. He prepared it lovingly and placed it in his own tomb. What hatred and ridicule he must have faced from his peers! He was the dissenting vote, the traitor to his class, the fool who had faith in the miracle man from Galilee. Luke writes the epitaph for this Joseph of whom we know so little and yet so much: "Joseph, a good and upright man" (Luke 23:50, *NIV*).

In this our age of trials may there be 10,000 men and women like Joseph of Arimathea. . . . people who take risks for what is right—rational, intelligent Christian, leaders in their communities, willing to be "salt" Christians, acting in faith to give seasoning to a flavorless world. The Holy Spirit is calling those "good and upright" people now. What an honor to be "in" this wonderful world, but "of" the next one.

Now is the time to encourage the faithful to render unto Caesar only that which is Caesar's and to give God all the rest. Give Him the best fruits of your time, your labors; give your love to the things that will not tarnish or wither away. The trial of Jesus, and of each one of His followers, goes on every day until He returns. He calls us to be actors in the drama, defenders of the faith, voices of righteousness: "You must be on your guard. You will be handed over to the local councils and flogged in the synagogues. On account of me you will stand before governors and kings as witness to them" (Mark 13:9, *NIV*). [⇧]

From: Crucify Him: A Lawyer looks at the trial of Jesus *by Dale Foreman (Zondervan, 1990). Provided by the publisher; used by permission.*



Historic Brethren Slogans About the Bible

Third of Three Parts

By Dale R. Stoffer

THIS ARTICLE is the third and final installment in a series devoted to slogans that have had a long and prominent history among the Brethren. An understanding of the significance of these slogans can help us appreciate the convictions that have been fundamental to the Brethren faith.

"In essentials unity, in nonessentials liberty, in all things charity"

In 1940 Charles F. Yoder, who had opened Brethren missions in Argentina, wrote a series of articles for the EVANGELIST on what he called "the Brethren slogan." He observed that the slogan "In essentials unity, in nonessentials liberty, in all things charity" was "known to every reader of Brethren literature, for it is found in our books and is quoted in our periodicals. It seems to be universally approved in the church . . . ."*

This slogan, like the motto "The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible," initially came into general use in The Brethren Church in the 1880s at the time of the division with the German Baptist Brethren. It served to define quite well the Progressive position that the church should be united on the essentials of the gospel. But on other matters—dress, church traditions, higher education, Sunday schools, and evangelism—individuals and individual churches need to be extended liberty of conscience. (The Progressives would have criticized the official position on the first two items just mentioned, but would have supported the other three.) The process of discussing such issues needs to take place in a context of mutual love.

*Charles F. Yoder, "The Brethren Slogan (I)," THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST, 62 (August 13, 1940), p. 8.

Dr. Stoffer is assistant professor of historical theology at Ashland Theological Seminary. He serves on The Brethren Church's Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication, which is preparing this series of articles.

Some excellent counsel

This slogan provides some excellent counsel on the interpretation and application of Scripture. First, like our Progressive forebears, we should regard as essential those things necessary for salvation and those things, both doctrinal and practical, that are clearly required or taught by Scripture (the person and work of Christ, the necessity of repentance and faith to receive salvation, fidelity in marriage, etc.). On these we should have universal agreement and unity; deviations from these standards should not be tolerated.

Second, on other issues not necessary for salvation and on doctrinal, moral, and practical issues on which the Bible has no clear directive, there should be liberty of conscience. Examples include the time of Christ's second coming, whether married Christians should practice contraception, and whether or not to use pianos, guitars, or drums in worship services.

Third, whenever disagreements arise within the church, we should "be patient, bearing with one another in love." Though it takes effort "to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace," this is the charge that Paul gives to every Christian (Eph. 4:2–3). Our goal must always be to speak the truth in love (Eph 4:15), for this is the only means by which the church can be built up as it seeks to understand and apply God's word.

You may wonder why you no longer often hear the three slogans discussed in this series of articles. I believe there are several reasons.

The "whole Gospel plea" has probably fallen into disuse because we live at a time when Christians emphasize their similarities rather than their differences. We Brethren, in our effort to identify with the evangelical movement, have tended not to emphasize our distinctive approach to baptism and Communion.

Second, the Christian church today tends to give less attention to doctrine than to "practical" issues such as church growth, counseling, youth ministry, etc. (all of which have their proper place). Each of these slogans reflects a concern for arriving at sound doctrine as well as practice. Present trends in the church have tended to create a setting in which these slogans and doctrine in general have less appeal.

Are these trends good?

Should we be concerned about these trends? Our Christian and Brethren faith rises or falls based upon our commitment to knowing and practicing biblical truth. If we fall prey to the recent tendency of depreciating doctrine, whether because of the liberal rejection of absolute truth or the conservative preference for "practical" programs that can bring growth, cultural respectability, and success, we will be contributing to a disregard for truth that will continue to erode the foundations of the church in America.

Let us never waver in our commitment to be faithful to God's truth as it has been revealed in Christ and His word. Only then will we have a context in which these slogans have a meaningful place. [⇧]

The Woman's Outlook Newsletter

A publication of the Brethren Woman's Missionary Society

May–June 1994 Volume 7, Number 5

The President's Pen

Dear Ladies,

We have all heard the saying "It's not *what* you know, but *who* you know that counts." We must admit there is some truth in this. I'm sure we have all been impressed (at one time or another) when an acquaintance mentions knowing an important person. How many times have we mentioned the name of Jesus in our conversations? He is certainly a very important person. Do we mention His name when we are with friends? Are they impressed that we "know" Him?

We have a Share Group that meets at our home on Tuesday evenings. We are participating in the study "Passing on the Promise" and, in watching the videos and studying the book, we are learning how to share our faith with those we come in contact with on a daily basis. It's not an easy thing to step out of our comfort zone and speak of Jesus as our friend. We need to be firm in our faith and secure in our knowledge of God. This is something we all need to work at and, in time, we will grow comfortable in sharing our faith.

Annual Conference is only a few months away. We look forward to seeing the Kumars and Allen Baer. They will have much to share with us. Plan to be at Conference.

Have any of you had a special program for the Public Service? If so, please write Joan Ronk and let her know and I am sure she will share those ideas with the rest of us.

The Executive Board of WMS will be meeting before Conference, so if you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions for WMS, please let me know. We will have only two meeting times at Conference this year, so business will be at a minimum.

I pray for all of you and trust that your WMS groups are having a great year.

God Bless You.
Shirley Black

WHAT IS YOUR PURPOSE?

Devotions given by Lois Oligee at Ohio WMS Conference, March 12, 1994

Text: *Blessed is that servant, whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.* Luke 12:43

What are *you* doing?

The WMS motto is Women Meant to Serve, and our devotional theme for this year is Living for Jesus in all that we do, say, think, read, and see. So why do we do what we are doing?

We have fundraisers, mother and daughter banquets, father and son dinners, Bible studies, and mission fairs. Why? It is time to quit looking for signs and start listening for sounds of His return, because **Jesus is coming again!**

We are to grow in love and admonition of our Lord; we are to become full-term babies and move from the diet of milk to that of meat.

For what purpose?
For a witness.

Of what?

God's knowledge can't stay *in* us. We are *light* and have to shine out, so others see Christ in us. Our daily actions are to bring others one step closer to Jesus Christ.

What, then, is the end?

We are to preach and teach to the world about God's love, His forgiveness, and saving grace. The Great Commission (*see below*) sends us *into* the world to preach, and yet we are not *of* the world.

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Matthew 28:18–20

They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.

John 17:16

We keep the world from "rubbing off on us" by protecting ourselves with daily study of God's Word and communion with Him. (This is one reason why a WMS goal is daily devotions.)

I'm excited about the missionaries getting the Word out. So must we, and the mother and daughter banquets, the father and son dinners, and the fundraisers have to give the message that Jesus saves.

A sponge, sitting in the sink and soaking up water, will soon sour. We should not be like that sponge. Instead, we need to be squeezed out and then used for God's work. In Ezekiel 33:7–9, the Lord speaks to Ezekiel:

I have made you a watchman; When I say to the wicked, "O wicked man, you will surely die," and you do not speak to dissuade him from his ways, that wicked man will die for his sin, and I will hold you accountable for his blood.

We are the watchman and our light must be evident in *all* that we do. Our service must be the Truth.

Missionary Miscellany

Allen Baer of Argentina and Prasanth and Nirmala Kumar of India plan to be in the U.S. during General Conference. The Kumars' son, Sudhir, hopes to come, also. Continue to pray that his visa will be granted. Pray for traveling mercies for all of them.

A new chapel, Casita de Betania, in Rosario, Argentina, is nearing completion. This chapel will seat 100. It is the location where María Miranda and her two brothers were reared. Her family is doing this as a memorial.

The Growth Partner Club Call for 1994 is for the Northwest Brethren Chapel in Tucson, pastored by Dave West. Proceeds from this call will help build an educational wing which will provide much-needed Sunday school rooms.

Something very exciting, called STAKE, is happening in the Florida district. Developed by the Missions/Outreach Ministry of the Florida District, this plan is to plant clusters of churches in close proximity to one another. The plan is to use tentmaking teams (individuals who are employed in secular jobs). If you are interested and want more information, contact the Missionary Board office in Ashland (524 College Avenue or phone 419-289-1708).

The Sarasota Hispanic Brethren Church will hold outdoor evangelistic services on the last weekends of April, May, and June in various parts of the city. Daniel Rosales, the pastor, wrote that Sarasota has a population of approximately 14,000 Hispanics. Only about 200 of these attend church in the four Hispanic evangelical churches in the city. That leaves 13,800 unchurched, unsaved people to reach with the gospel!



The outdoor services follow house-to-house visits, the Bible method (Acts 5:42). Their goal is to visit 1,000 Hispanic families in their homes, not only to give them an invitation, but also to present them with the gospel personally. And then come the outdoor evangelistic meetings in different places in the city each month. The meetings will include evangelistic films, Hispanic music, and the Gospel message by Pastor Rosales.

Pray for this ministry, for Pastor Rosales, for those who will hear, and that Satan's works will be destroyed.

Tim and Jan Eagle and Todd and Tracy Ruggles had the opportunity at Christmas to work with volunteers from the U.S. to distribute gift boxes to more than 2,000 children! The four were translators as well as workers. The packages included a new outfit with socks and shoes, underwear, toothpaste and brush, and a toy. Each child received a Christmas card, which was made by another child in the United States. For them, this was the true spirit of Christmas.

The Eagles and Ruggles request prayers for:

1. approval of their permanent visas;
2. a place where Jan can teach and Tracy can use her nursing skills;
3. God's guidance in making contacts in Prados del Rosario — Tim and Todd work here;
4. for growth and faithful witnessing in all areas; and
5. Pastor Caleron, who will be ordained soon, and Ramon Hernandez, who will be licensed. They will assist in pastoral responsibilities.

Dick and Kitty Winfield will be short-term missionaries in June, July, and August. They will teach English as the second language to students in China and witness to the nationals in their everyday experiences.

The Home Missions pastors and their families are the May missionaries-of-the month: Jim and Ann Miller in Carmel, Indiana; Charlie and Linda Beekley in Frederick, Maryland; and Todd and Princene Bonnett in Mansfield, Ohio.

In June the missionaries-of-the-month are Prasanth and Nirmala Kumar in India and David and Jenny Loi in Malaysia.

Plan to attend the

1994 GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN CHURCH

August 8–12

Ashland, Ohio

The Woman's Missionary Society meetings are Tuesday and Thursday. The luncheon is Thursday noon, August 11.

Special features of WMS are the Project offering and the Thank offering.

Don't miss this time of worship, learning, fellowship, and business with other WMS ladies.

THE WOMAN'S OUTLOOK NEWSLETTER

Published bimonthly in January, March, May, July, September, and November by the Woman's Missionary Society of The Brethren Church.

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The National Project

David and Jenny Loi are dedicated workers in Malaysia, and their ministry continues to expand. This creates a good problem—the need for additional well-trained workers. Last summer we women perceived this need and chose to establish an endowment fund for the seminary training of Malaysian workers. Our offering received in August will be given to the Missionary Board who, in turn, will invest it and use the interest for training students in Malaysia for the pastoral ministry.

Seminary training in Malaysia—as in the United States—is very expensive. This money will be a scholarship, given to the students for their seminary expenses. Jim Black, executive director of the Missionary Board, said at least two very capable young men are ready now for seminary training.

The students will probably attend a seminary in Singapore, not in the U.S., which alleviates many problems. Among them is securing a visa into the U.S.A. for study.

The Malaysian endowment is a two-year project; we are the givers; the Missionary Board is the investor; and the Malaysian students are the receivers. The Missionary Board will give only the earned interest to the seminary students. The principal (our offering) will not be spent, but will always be earning interest to help additional seminarians. This is the joy of an endowment!

And, as you pray for the Malaysian missionaries (David and Jenny, David Chew, and other lay leaders), pray for more generous understanding by the Malaysian government. The Brethren Church is not recognized by the Malaysian government, which presents problems.

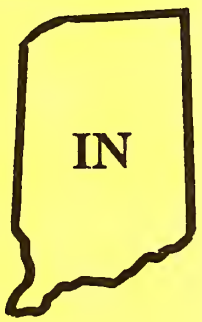
Men of Mission

Last year I wrote that Brethren Men of Mission could include women, and several responded by working at the Riverside Christian School in Lost Creek, Kentucky. Through cooperative efforts, the classrooms were finished and the school served the needs of more students in southeastern Kentucky this year.

As at home, there is always work to do at the Riverside School. This year the men's efforts are focused on raising $10,000 for the school. Their project offering will be received at General Conference.

The Men of Mission are communicating the need for funds, but those in your church may need a reminder from us. The WMS has contributed to the support of the Riverside School for many years, both as a local society's project and through a portion of the Thank Offering. We are glad the BMOM are doing likewise.

There is no organized work team at Riverside this summer, but if you want to go on your own schedule, contact Doran and Nancy Hostetler (606-666-7627).



District Doings



The WMS sessions of the 1993 INDIANA DISTRICT CONFERENCE were conducted by Dolly Zerbe. The title of her President's message was "What Kind of Dirt are You?" Dolly talked about the different kinds of dirt she has on their place—the good, black, workable dirt in her flower beds, the so-so dirt in her garden, and the very, very hard dirt in the backyard.

She compared this to people with whom we come in contact. The very easy to work with who make it such a joy for a WMS president. The so-so people who do OK, if the conditions are just perfect, and the very, very hard who can cause a president to want to throw in the towel! Dolly stated that all this dirt can be productive. She continues to keep working and the very hard dirt is going to produce a beautiful lawn. The so-so dirt is going to produce a good garden, and the good workable dirt is producing beautiful flowers.

This is the way with God. He continues to work with us until we will be productive. All can be productive. It is just that some are harder to work with than others. Dolly challenged the ladies to be that good, black, rich, pliable, workable dirt.

And, with that challenge, Dolly asked that her name not be nominated again for president. She has served for eleven years. The officers elected for two years are: President—Susie Stout, Peru; Vice President—Wanda Armantrout, Huntington; Secretary-Treasurer—Beverly Baker, South Bend; Assistant Secretary-Treasurer—Cindi Stout, Burlington; Financial Secretary—Charlene Rowser, Goshen; and Assistant Financial Secretary—Matilda Stout, Peru.

The OHIO WMS DISTRICT CONFERENCE was hosted by the Gretna ladies in March. Patti Bub presided over the business meeting, following devotions by Lois Oligee. Patti announced the district retreat is October 14–15 at Camp Bethany. Shirley Black, the national president, reminded the ladies about the Malaysian endowment for the national project. She also reported on last year's national project—the offering for the girls' orphanage in India. The Kumars presently have 15 girls in the orphanage and soon 15 more will move in. With your project offerings, you have helped to give these girls a Christian home.

The district project for next year is financial and prayer support for a church planting project in the Medina/Wadsworth area.

Thanks!

FROM THE SEWING AND WORLD RELIEF COORDINATOR:

A special thanks to all the ladies and societies who sent quilt squares this year. In the works for the Conference auction are: two wall hangings/throws, two aprons, and eight tote bags.

These projects will use all of the squares that I have—both from past years and this year. So, after Conference, I will once again ask for quilt squares. You might want to begin thinking about them now.

God Bless You,
Joan Merrill

FROM THE WMS SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT:

Dear Friends,

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for the scholarship. It always seems that just when I start to wonder how I will be able to afford another semester, God steps in and provides. It's a real blessing to have that kind of encouragement. I pray that God will bless you for your generosity. My plans after graduation aren't set yet, but I hope to find employment, be a tentmaker, and help with STAKE in Florida.

Thanks again.

In Christ,
Annalee Hoover

COMING IN MAY —



The suggested book list for your inspirational reading next year. The Executive Committee will choose the books at the May Board meeting, then the list will be compiled and sent to your president. This gives you time to consider your choices before purchasing them at General Conference.

The Editor's Ending

Dear Friend,

Consider the questions in Lois's devotions—what are you doing? and what is your purpose?

When you evaluate your society's activities and check your goals, think about why you did this and that. Did others know you were a Christian when you did this, or were you considered part of the world?

There are many good and worthwhile causes in the country today, but the Christian message is different. Make sure your activities and contributions glorify Christ as Lord. And this is true for you personally as well as for your society. This is another very obvious way of "Passing on the Promise" and "Living Proof" that you are a Christian and a follower of Christ. Let your light shine in all your activities.

The ***National Day of Prayer is Thursday, May 5.*** The United States is the only country to observe this day. We have numerous reasons for praise and numerous petitions. I encourage you to participate in this day as a person and as a family. Remember, the family who prays together stays together.



In May and June we celebrate Mother's, Children's, and Father's Days—wonderful occasions for us who have happy memories. And now is the time for us to build happy memories for our children, showing by example the Christian's walk and talk, and encouraging them to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior and to live lives pleasing to the Lord. It is not too early to begin praying for and with your children and grandchildren. They have to be protected *from* the world just as we do, because the devil is on the loose. Furthermore, "our" children are a gift from God; they are really God's children.

Fortify your family with daily devotions. Start the day and conclude the night with prayer. The little symbol of praying hands which I use frequently in the *Newsletter* is not a space filler. It is a reminder that our hands, hearts, and minds are turned to God in praise and supplication.



An old and beautiful hymn is "Happy the Home When God is There," based on II Timothy 1:5: "When I call to remembrance the . . . faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother, . . . and thy mother." The words are written by Henry Ware, Jr., and Bryan Leech wrote the last stanza. The tune is by John Dykes.

Pray this:

Happy the home when God is there
And love fills everyone,
When with united work and prayer
The Master's will is done.

Happy the home where God's strong love
Is starting to appear,
Where all the children hear His fame
And parents hold Him dear.

Happy the home where prayer is heard
And praise is everywhere,
Where parents love the sacred Word
And its true wisdom share.

Lord, let us in our homes agree
This blessed peace to gain;
Unite our hearts in love to Thee,
And love to all will reign. Amen.

With this poem as our foundation, we can celebrate a Family Day.

Your friend,

Joan

Joan

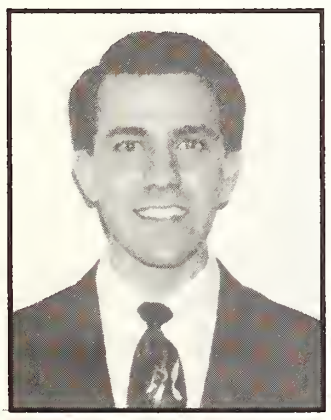
The 1994 Crusader Interns and District Crusaders

Twenty-one young people will serve in the Crusader program this summer. Ten will serve as Crusader Interns, and eleven will serve on three District Crusader teams in the Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Southeastern Districts.

Crusader Interns

THE YOUNG ADULTS serving in the Crusader Intern program have reached the point of giving serious consideration to full-time Christian service. As Crusader Interns, they have an opportunity to experience ministry in a real-life setting in one location for the entire summer under the guidance of a qualified pastor/supervisor. One of the benefits of serving as Crusader Interns is that it provides these young adults with an opportunity to clarify God's call on their lives.

The following 10 persons will be serving as Crusader Interns this summer.



Kurt Stout, a member of the First Brethren Church in Burlington, Indiana, and a third-year student at Ashland Theological Seminary, will serve as a pastoral intern at the First Brethren Church in North Manchester, Indiana. This will be Kurt's second summer at North Manchester.

Stacy Oligee, a member of the First Brethren Church in West Alexandria, Ohio, and a second-year student at Ashland Theological Seminary, will serve as a Youth Intern, supervising the Ohio District Crusader Program and assisting with the 1994 BYIC Convention.



Karen Robins, a member of the First Brethren Church in Tucson, Arizona, and a senior at Ashland University, will serve her second summer as an Intern at the First Brethren Church in Nappanee, Indiana.



Annalee Hoover, a member of the Park Street Brethren Church in Ashland, Ohio, and a graduate this month (May 1994) from Ashland University, will serve as a Christian Education Intern at the Pleasant View Brethren Church in Vandergrift, Pennsylvania.



Sarah Hollewell, from the Lanark, Illinois, First Brethren Church and a senior at Ashland University, will serve as a member of the camp staff at Camp Bethany in Ohio.



Chris Diehl, a member of the Fairless Hills-Levittown Brethren Church in Levittown, Pennsylvania, and a senior at Philadelphia College of the Bible,






Left to right: Becki Fulmer, Wendy Barr, Dawn Kidd, and Lawrence Logan.




will serve as a Pastoral Intern at the Gretna Brethren Church in Bellefontaine, Ohio.

Four Interns—**Becki Fulmer** (University Church, Ashland, Ohio, and a second-year student at Ashland Theological Seminary); **Wendy Barr** (Hagerstown, Maryland, First Brethren Church and a junior at Ashland University); **Dawn Kidd** (Bethlehem Brethren Church, Harrisonburg, Virginia, and a part of the work force); and **Lawrence Logan** (also from the Bethlehem Brethren Church and a sophomore at Bridgewater College)—will serve as camp staff members at the Brethren Retreat Center in Shipshewana, Indiana.

District Crusaders

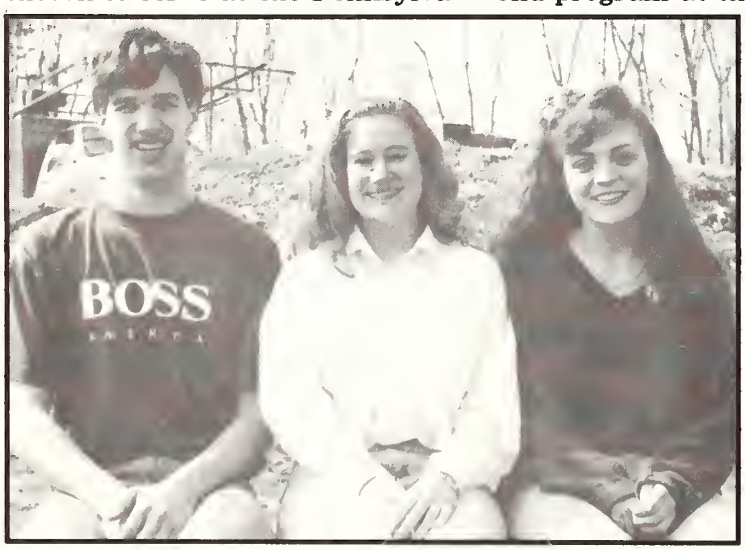
THOSE SERVING in the District Crusader program are high school young people, ages 15–18, who have completed the tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grade. District Crusaders serve within their own districts.

The Pennsylvania District will be fielding its fifth District Crusader team this summer. This is the second year for the Ohio District to participate in this program, and the first year for the Southeastern District.

Pennsylvania District Crusaders

Three young people have been chosen to serve as the Pennsylvania District Crusaders. **Jaime Gillespie**, a second year veteran, will serve as captain of the team. She is from the Vinco Brethren Church in Mineral Point. **Eric Rosie** from the Masontown Brethren Church and **Angela Szelong** from the Valley Brethren Church in Jones Mills will serve as the other team members.

This team will serve at three vacation Bible schools (at the Wayne Heights, Masontown, and Cameron Brethren Churches) and work as camp staff at the Pennsylvania elementary camp. In addition, they will do a weekend program at the Berlin Brethren Church and help with the Pennsylvania District Youth Conference.



Pennsylvania District Crusaders (left to right) Eric Rosie, Jaime Gillespie (captain), and Angela Szelong.

Southeastern District Crusaders

Three young ladies will serve on the Southeastern District Crusader team. Jenna Bowen from the Oak Hill, West Virginia, Brethren Church will serve as team captain. Nicole Hult of the Hagerstown, Maryland, First Brethren Church, and Erin Baker of the St. James, Maryland, Brethren Church will serve as the other team members. This team will serve at the Southeastern District intermediate camp and assist with vacation Bible school at the Hagerstown First Brethren Church



Team captain Jenna Bowen



Erin Baker



Nicole Hult

Ohio District Crusaders

Five young people will serve on the 1994 Ohio District Crusader team. Kayleen Gibson, a second-year District Crusader, will serve



Moderator Jim Hess guides the plow as Park Street Brethren pull together to break ground for the new Family Life Center.

Park Street Church Breaks Ground April 24 for New Family Life Center

Ashland, Ohio — The congregation of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church broke ground on Sunday morning, April 24, for a new Family Life Center.

When completed, the 13,000-square-foot Family Life Center will contain eleven classrooms, a kitchen, and a large multi-purpose area suitable for fellowship meals, Communion services, and other large gatherings. The multi-purpose area will also accommodate various recreational activities, such as basketball, volleyball, exercise groups, children's games, etc.

Simonson Builders of Ashland will serve as general contractor for the Family Life Center, with construction to begin as soon as all permits are granted. It is expected that the building will be completed by this fall, with an estimated cost of construction of $885,000.

The usually Sunday morning schedule of two worship services with Sunday school in between was set aside on ground-breaking Sunday. Instead, an opening brief time of worship and meditation led into a Concert of Prayer. This was followed by a celebration worship service, at the conclusion of which the congregation went outside for the actually breaking of ground.

Doug Cooper, who normally serves as worship leader for the first worship service, and Rev. Randy Saultz, associate pastor of the congregation, led the Concert of Prayer. Various members of the congregation—including youth, seniors, and those in between—read scripture and offered prayers during this service, in addition to the times of corporate prayer by the congregation.

The celebration worship service included three anthems by the choir under the direction of Minister of Music Neil Ebert. During two of these, the congregation joined with the choir for parts of the anthems. Christy Van Duyne sang a vocal solo (*Cornerstone*); and Susan Amstutz, Tim Hess, and Scot Millhouse gave a dramatic presentation of "Jack and the Vine." Dr. Arden Gilmer, senior pastor of the congregation, capped the service with a message on "Building for Eternity."

Dr. Charles Munson, a long-time member of Park Street Church and a retired professor at Ashland College and Ashland Theological Seminary, shared thoughts during the actual ground-breaking ceremony. Dr. Munson stated, "The church building you see here now was built because others had faith in the future. Now it is our turn to have faith in the future, and time to build this Family Life Center."

Then members and friends of the congregation joined together to break ground by pulling a hand plow—guided by church moderator Jim Hess—thus symbolizing what can be accomplished when God's people work together.

In commenting on the purpose of the new Family Life Center, Pastor Gilmer said, "I am grateful for the people in the Park Street Brethren congregation who have a vision for serving the Lord and our community. Our new facility will allow us to expand our ministry, with the goal of offering meaningful activities seven days a week. . . . We plan to continue to be a constructive influence in our community. We care and want to be a positive influence for the Lord."

George Snyder chaired the committee that met with an architectural firm to design plans for the Family Life Center. Tim Shultz is serving as chair of the construction committee.

— reported by Margaret Ann Hess

(continued from previous page)

as captain. She is a member of the Garber Brethren Church in Ashland. Other team members will include Tiffany Ford from the Newark Brethren Church; Heather Kyser from the Smithville Brethren Church; Jamie Hurley from the Gretna Brethren Church in Bellefontaine; and Andy McGinnis from the Smithville Brethren Church. This team will serve at the Ohio District elementary and middler camps and work with vacation Bible school at the West Alexandria First Brethren Church. [⇧]



Ohio District Crusaders (left to right) Jamie Hurley, Andy McGinnis, Heather Kyser, Tiffany Ford, and Kayleen Gibson (captain).

Charles Lake and Jay Kesler Bring Messages At Brethren Pastoral Family Retreat in April

Nashville, Ind. — Approximately seventy pastors, associate pastors, and other elders, 50 spouses, and 15 children attended the 1994 Pastoral Family Retreat held February 19–21 in Indiana's beautiful Brown County State Park.

The retreat featured a worship service led by Dr. Charles Lake, senior pastor of the Community Church of Greenwood, Ind., and several of his staff members; two messages by Dr. Jay Kesler, president of Taylor University, Upland, Ind.; a prayer session; and a concert of Christian music by the Singing Thomas Family.

The retreat also provided opportunities for food and fellowship, as well as free time for recreation, sightseeing, and rest. Many of those attending the retreat spent at least part of this time walking the beautiful nature trails in the park, and most were rewarded by one or more sightings of white-tailed deer. The weather cooperated by providing two warm sunny days. Only on the final morning did it rain, which many saw as a blessing since it made it a little easier to leave the serenity of the park.

The worship service led by the Greenwood Community Church staff included special music and group singing, plus two dramatic presentations—a first-person monologue of Esther, and a skit about a woman who in trying to do it all in her church lost sight of God's grace. The service also included a message by Greenwood senior pastor Dr. Charles Lake, who spoke on causes of discouragement in the pastorate.

Dr. Lake set forth four causes of discouragement and described their antidotes. They were:

(1) Criticism. Antidote: seek to determine if justified or unjustified; if justified, admit your failure and ask for forgiveness; if unjustified, don't defend yourself, for God will vindicate you; if a "gray area," admit that you might be wrong.

(2) Lack of commitment by church people. Antidote: relate to them in a way that will challenge their commitment; also spend most of your time and effort with the committed, not with the uncommitted.

(3) Periods of little "fruit." Antidote: take a lesson from the farm—to reap a harvest, you have to plow, plant, and cultivate. In times when there is little harvest, spend more time planting and cultivating.

(4) Physical and spiritual burnout. Antidote: Physical and spiritual exercise; don't be always giving, but spend time taking in.

Dr. Lake concluded by advising those who are discouraged to focus not on their discouragement or on people or circumstances, but to focus instead on Jesus and on the power or God.

Dr. Jay Kesler, in the first of his two messages, dealt with some of the greatest problems and needs of pastors, as determined by a survey conducted by *Christianity Today*. Among these were the expectation of perfection; time demands versus financial rewards; spousal and family resentment; insecurity about the future; and fear of playing favorites.

In his second message, Dr. Kesler declared "Why I believe in the church." He gave five reasons: (1) because it is the only institution dealing with ultimate issues; (2) because it provides perspective to give dignity to human beings; (3) because it provides a moral and ethical compass (absolutes) in an age of relativism; (4) because it is a place where you can find community, healing, and love; and (5) because it has provided the motivation for the most lasting and selfless acts of humanity, as people have been



Participants in the Pastoral Family Retreat.



Dr. Jay Kesler (c.) chats with Brethren pastors Don Rowser (l.) and Bob Keplinger.



The Singing Thomas Family (l. to r.) Rod, Barb, Tiffany, and Tim.



Characters in the Wayne Heights Brethren Church living portrayal of the Last Supper are (l. to r.) Nathaniel or Bartholomew (John Schlegel), James the Less (Henry Woodring), Andrew (Austin Sachs), Peter (John Schildt), Judas Iscariot (Jim Nolte), John (Jack King), Jesus (Rev. Harold Walton), James (Rob Harner), Thomas (John Scott), Philip (Bill Barnes, Jr.), Thaddeus (Marvin Hahn), Matthew (T. King), and Simon the Zealot (Don Kline).

Living Portrayal of the Last Supper Given On Good Friday at Wayne Heights Church

Waynesboro, Pa. — A living portrayal of the Last Supper was presented on Good Friday, April 1, at the Wayne Heights Brethren Church.

In the portrayal, the disciples and Jesus were frozen in the pose made famous by Leonardo Da Vinci in his painting of the Last Supper. This pose represents the disciples' reaction to the words of Jesus, "One of you will betray me."

As the disciples remained in that pose, a spotlight focused on each one in turn, as the story of that disciple's encounter with Christ was told and an account of the life he lived for Christ was related.

Portraying the twelve disciples were John Schlegel as Nathaniel (Bartholomew); Henry Woodring as James the Less; Austin Sachs as Andrew; John Schildt as Peter; Jim Nolte as Judas Iscariot; Jack King as John; Rob Harner as James the Son of Zebedee; John Scott as Thomas; Bill Barnes, Jr., as Philip; Marvin Hahn as Thaddeus; T. King as Matthew; and Don Kline as Simon the Zealot. Rev. Harold Walton, pastor of the Wayne Heights Church, portrayed Christ.

Narrators for the enactment were Dolores Kline and Allan Green. Kim Harner was in charge of lighting and music. Directing the presentation were Mickey Sachs and Judy Stevens. Mickey Sacks also spent many hours preparing robes, wigs, beards, and the table setting for the program. The spotlight was loaned by the Potomac Players through Mike Botzan. The presentation was based on a number of sources, including the descriptions of the Twelve Apostles given by Louis J. Kovar in *The Twelve Soliloques.*

"We thank the Lord for enabling us to complete this heart-searching presentation," said Pastor Walton. He noted that the directors are hoping to repeat the portrayal next year.

— reported by Pastor Harold Walton

(continued from previous page)

moved by the compassion of Christ. Dr. Kesler's combination of deep insight and wit made him an ideal retreat speaker.

The retreat program concluded with a concert of southern gospel music by the Singing Thomas Family. The group includes former Brethren pastor Rev. Rod Thomas, his wife Barb, and their two children—son Tim (20), and daughter Tiffany (16). They sang a combination of familiar and less familiar songs, including some they wrote themselves. They sang a cappella, with soundtracks, and with their own accompaniment (keyboard, bass guitar, and drums).

Other things of note about the conference include: the fine song-leading by Rev. Tom Schiefer; the not-quite-ready-for-Sunday-morning-worship-service singers (a quartet recruited on the spot to sing a special number); the great group singing; and the excellent planning and leadership of the retreat planning committee—Rev. Tim Garner, Rev. Phil Medsger, and Rev. Carl M. Phillips. Honorariums for the speakers at the retreat were covered by generous donations from both the Indiana District and The Carpenter's Shop (the Brethren bookstore in Ashland, Ohio).

— reported by Dick Winfield

STAKE Gaining Momentum For First Phase in August

Valrico, Fla. — Preparations for the STAKE (Saturation of the Target Area for Kingdom Extension) church-planting effort in Orlando, Fla., are gaining momentum, with a good possibility that a number of church planters will be in the Orlando area in August.

In March, three tentmaker candidates visited Orlando to see the area, learn more about the project, and check into housing and jobs. In all, 13 applications (10 lay, 3 pastoral) have been received from candidates for this August.

Additional tentmakers and prayer intercessors are being sought. For more information, contact Rev. David Stone, STAKE, 130 Bloomingdale Ave. E., Valrico, FL 33594.



Tables set for the Seder (Passover) service. The center table is in the form of a cross.

Presentation of Passover at Wabash Church Adds Meaning to Good Friday Observance

Wabash, Ind. — Brethren at the Wabash First Brethren Church remembered the sacrifice of our Passover Lamb on Good Friday by being led through a presentation of the Jewish Passover or "Seder."

The Passover service, led by Mrs. Beverly Jeffers, was presented with all its rites and rituals, along with a running commentary by Mrs. Jeffers telling how the symbolism of this observance points to the Messiah.

The ceremony begins with the lighting of candles, symbolic of worship at the Old Testament Tabernacle. It continues with elements that have both historic and symbolic meaning, including foods and hymns. Each part of the ceremony is done in a specific order. In fact, the word "Seder" means order. The service ends with the partaking of the Bread and the Cup.

The Passover service is both a memorial of past deliverance and a prophecy of the coming of the Messiah. At the end of the table is an empty chair and the "Elijah cup," a reminder of the One who is coming. During the ceremony, one person is asked to open an outer door to see if Elijah has indeed come. Upon receiving the report that he is not there, the phrase is recited, "Maybe next year in Jerusalem!"

As Christians, we look to the second coming of the Lord Jesus, while the Jewish people look to the hope of Israel, their Messiah. Both Christian and Jewish believers are aware that our Lord and their Messiah will come back soon.

— reported by Pastor Don Siders

Youth Enact "The Champion" For Sunrise Service at Berlin

Berlin, Pa. — The Easter Sunrise Service took a different track this year at the Berlin Brethren Church.

In addition to some readings and a hymn, the Senior Youth of the church acted out the song by Carman called "The Champion." This song uses a boxing match between Jesus and Satan, refereed by God and attended by angels and demons, to symbolize the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Wearing black and white costumes, the youth demonstrated how Satan thought he had defeated Jesus. Then they portrayed how Jesus rose from death and won the battle of the ages to become our "Champion."

The youth were excited about the presentation, and those who attended the service were touched by the way this contemporary song communicates the truth and power of the 2000-year-old Easter message.

— reported by Linda Karchner, youth director



Participants in "The Champion": (left side, clockwise from bottom) Bob Landis (Jesus), Jennifer Hay (angel), Jesse Lee (Jeremiah), Eric Landis (God), and Michelle Davis (Job); (rt. side, clockwise from bottom) Jill Philip (demon), Kim Custer (Satan), Matthew Glessner (Hitler), Greg Tarker (Capone), Seth Deem and Matt Kunkle (demons).

Life-Changing Words is Theme For Renewal Services at Valley

Jones Mills, Pa. — Spiritual renewal was the goal of special services held April 10–13 at the Valley Brethren Church.

Rev. Fred Miller, pastor of the Mt. Olive Brethren Church of Pineville, Va., gave the messages for the services, speaking on "Five Words That Will Change Your Life Forever." The words were focus, trust, vision, heartburn, and prayer. Rev. Miller also presented messages for children.

Valley Pastor Bill Yoder served as worship leader for the services. The Senior Brethren Youth in Christ group of the church introduced each message during the evening services with a dramatic skit.

Approximately 35 people came to the altar during the services to focus on Jesus; to pray for someone with whom to share the message of salvation; to express a desire for God; or to gain a vision for the church, the pastor, church families, and the lost around them. Average attendance was 80.

"We received a blessing from the services and from Pastor Fred," said Valley member LaVerne Keslar, "and we hope that spiritual renewal will continue in our daily lives and go out beyond the four walls of the Valley Church."

— reported by LaVerne Keslar

The problem is not that the churches are filled with empty pews, but that the pews are filled with empty people.

— Charlie Shedd

Little Crusader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

Hi boys and girls!

How often should we pray? Should we pray only right before we eat and at bedtime? Or should we pray throughout the day whenever we feel like talking to God?

I think the answer to this question can be found in the Gospel of Luke, chapter 6, beginning with verse 12. Jesus had a very important job to do. He had to choose twelve men who would follow Him everywhere He went and tell people about God. Before He chose these men, Jesus went to a mountain to pray to His Father. The Bible says that He prayed all night. Jesus, who was perfect, prayed all night!

I don't think any of us have ever come close to praying all night. But I think this is a good example that shows us that we can pray to God whenever we want and need to talk to Him. If God only wanted us to pray before meals and at bedtime, Jesus would have set that example for us.

Remember, Jesus looks forward to our talking to Him. Don't forget to pray!

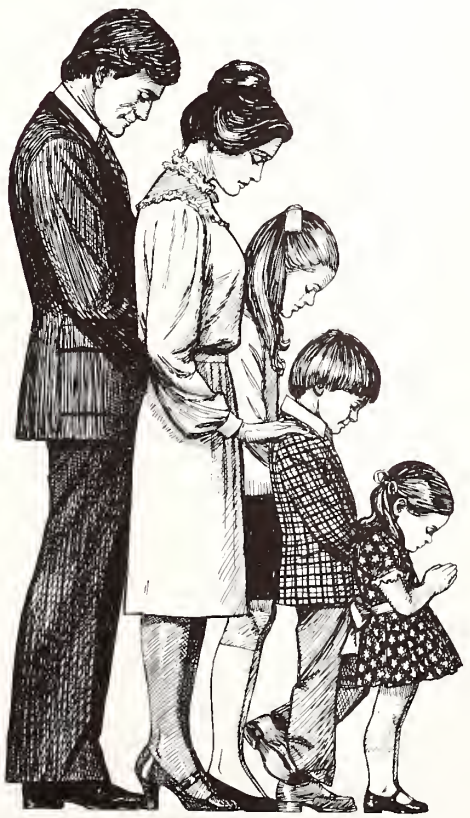
Complete the Crossword Puzzle

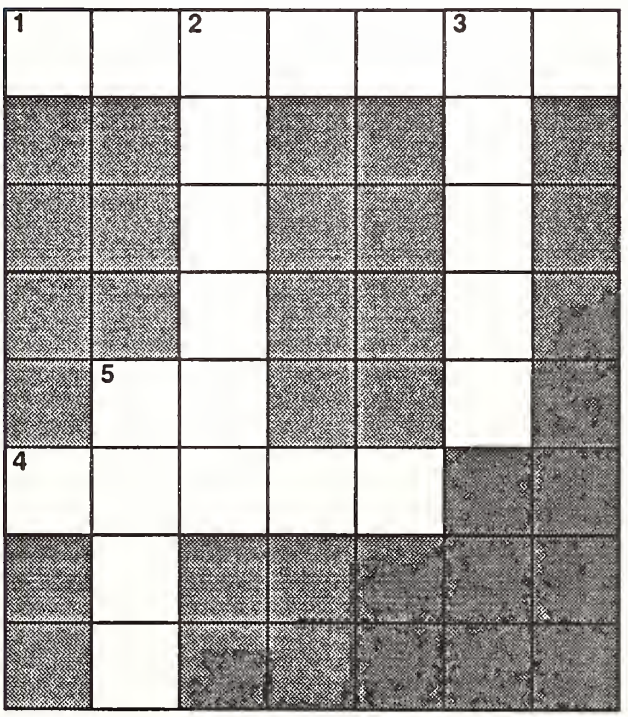
Across

1. Talking to God is called _____.
4. _____ wants us to talk to Him.
5. God hears ___ prayers when I pray.

Down

2. When should we pray?
3. In the story, Jesus prayed all _____.
5. A time we usually pray is before a _____.





Larry Hanson Licensed to Brethren Ministry and Installed as Assistant Pastor of S. Bend Church

South Bend, Ind. — D. Larry Hanson was installed Sunday, March 13, as a licensed minister in the Brethren Church and as assistant pastor of the First Brethren Church of South Bend.

The installation ceremony, which took place during the evening worship service of the South Bend Church, was conducted by Indiana District Elder Gene Eckerley and South Bend Senior Pastor Larry Baker. A reception for Hanson and his family followed in the fellowship hall.



The Larry Hanson family: (r. to l.) Larry, Cindy, and daughters Jolene and Charlene.

Larry Hanson was baptized and became a member of the South Bend First Brethren Church in May 1985. Since then he has endeavored to mature in Christ. He has served in various capacities in the congregation—as bus driver, youth advisor, Sunday school teacher, deacon, moderator, and co-coordinator of Passing On the Promise. He also served as maintenance director of the Brethren Retreat for over a year.

In October 1992, at a denominational retreat on church planting, Larry responded to a call to ministry, indicating that he believed that God was calling him to be involved in this kind of service. He made his call known to the South Bend Church, and the congregation affirmed that call by first asking the Indiana Pastoral and Congregational Relations Ministry to examine him for licensure, and then by calling him to become assistant pastor of the church.

While serving the South Bend congregation on a part-time basis, Larry is equipping himself for further ministry by attending Bethel College in Mishawaka, Ind., where he is pursuing a pastoral ministries degree. He is also employed as an automotive machinist.

Hanson is married to the former Cindy Lightfoot, and he and Cindy have two daughters, Jolene and Charlene.

— reported by Pastor Larry Baker

Pastor Bill Skeldon Honored as Oak Hill Area "Person of Week"

Oak Hill, W. Va. — Rev. Bill Skeldon, pastor of the Oak Hill First Brethren Church, was honored as "Plateau Person of the Week" in late March by *The Fayette Tribune*, an Oak Hill area newspaper.

Rev. Skeldon was so honored because of a ceremony he led on Palm Sunday this year in which married couples were given the opportunity to renew their wedding vows.

Rev. Skeldon and his wife, Gene, had renewed their own wedding vows last summer while visiting the Holy Land. They did so at the site where it is believed that Jesus turned water into wine at the wedding in Cana of Galilee. That experience was so powerful and meaningful for the Skeldons that they decided to make the opportunity for reaffirmation of wedding vows available to all in the Oak Hill area who wished to participate.

An article about Rev. Skeldon and his selection as Plateau Person of the Week appeared in the March 28 edition of *The Fayette Tribune*. The article concluded with this paragraph: "Rev. Bill Skeldon embodies the Christian tenet of love of God, love of his Son, and love of your fellow man. His thoughtfulness and that love enabled others to share an extraordinary Palm Sunday yesterday. We salute him as **Plateau Person of the week.**"

Couples participating in the ceremony of reaffirmation of wedding vows were: David and Jennifer Bowling; Bill and Cissy Buskus; Charles and Kathy Canterbury; Harlan and Geneva Compton; Gary and Amy Crouch; David and Vicki Fitzpatrick; Paul and Jean Fox; Mike and Cara Pomeroy; Fred and Suzanne Pennington; Max and Jenny Phillips; Milton and Lois Robinson; Matthew and Jane Skeldon (Rev. and Mrs. Skeldon's son and daughter-in-law); Larry and Tammy Thompson; and Rev. and Mrs. Skeldon.

— reported by R. Rogusky

Dr. J.D. "Bud" Hamel Honored For Service to Florida Churches

Sarasota, Fla. — Dr. J.D. "Bud" Hamel, pastor for 28 years of the First Brethren Church of Sarasota and now Pastor Emeritus of that congregation, was honored at the Florida District Conference in March for his service to the Brethren churches of the Florida District.

Dr. Hamel was presented a plaque by the district which read: "Dr. J. D. 'Bud' Hamel, in appreciation for outstanding and faithful service to the Lord and to the Brethren Churches of Florida . . . Florida District of the Brethren Church, March 6th, 1994."



Dr. J.D. Hamel (l.) receives the plaque honoring him for service to the Florida District churches from Florida District Coordinator Rev. Buck Garrett.

The conference was held at the Sarasota First Brethren Church, and Dr. Hamel was the keynote speaker. He spoke on the conference theme, "Looking Unto Jesus" (Hebrews 12:1–2).

From The Grape Vine

Sherry Van Duyne was named Christian Educator of the Year at Ashland Theological Seminary this spring. This is an annual award made to senior seminary students in the field of Christian education. Selection is made by local seminaries, but a certificate of recognition is awarded by the North American Association of Professors of Christian Education to those who are selected. Criteria for the award include academic ability, leadership qualities, and promise for further graduate work in Christian education. Mrs. Van Duyne is graduating this month (May) from the seminary with a Master of Arts in Christian Education degree. She is on staff at the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church as Christian Education Coordinator.

Brethren House Ministries of St. Petersburg, Fla., recently published two new resources. *Nurturing Our Selves* is a book to help teachers prepare themselves for sharing God's message with their students. It includes exercises that provide "inward journey" experiences that can be used by individuals or in teachers' meetings. *Worship Services for Children* is a book of ideas for involving children in singing, Scripture, reflecting on a day's theme, litanies, offerings, and prayers.

The **Men of Mission of the First Brethren Church, Falls City, Nebr.,** sponsored a breakfast on Easter Sunday morning, with Mike McGinnis preparing the food. More than 40 people attended the breakfast. Attendance at a gospel concert by the Messengers, a quartet from Topeka, Kans., following the breakfast was 75, a record attendance in recent years. William G. Shipman is serving as interim pastor of the church.

Helen Dickson, a member of the Huntington, Ind., First Brethren Church and wife of the pastor of that congregation, was hospitalized in April for blood clots in her lungs. Her need was put on the Pastors' Prayer Chain as well as on the prayer list of the Huntington Church. She was told by the staff at the hospital where she was a patient that she must have had many people praying for her, because that was the only thing she had going for her. She is now home, but still has a long way to go before she is fully recovered. She expresses her deep gratitude to all who have been praying for her.

Twenty-five **Brethren Youth in Christ (BYIC) members at the Bryan First Brethren Church** spent the night of March 19 in rocking chairs rocking the night away to raise money for the Camp Shipshewana Fund. As they rocked, they enjoyed an evening of games, mystery guests (who appeared at all hours of the night), food, and fun. And by their rocking, they raised approximately $700 for the Camp Shipshewana Fund. They were helped in their efforts by youth advisors Randy and Lori Fisher, Dave and Nancy Schairbaum, and Larry and Tami Smith.

Donations to **World Relief** of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) are running $550,000 short of what this agency needs in order to carry on its ministry, according to an item in a recent World Relief newsletter. Some critically-important ministries of World Relief will be affected this year if current giving trends continue. Brethren giving for World Relief has also been down in the past year. Brethren are urged to be faithful by their prayers and gifts in their support of the relief and development work of World Relief.

Judas Tells His Story at Cheyenne Sonrise Service

Cheyenne, Wyo. — Continuing the tradition of "first-person" accounts by biblical characters during the Easter Sonrise Service at the Cheyenne Brethren Church, Pastor Emery Hurd this year made what may have been one of his most difficult presentations, that of Judas Iscariot.

Standing with his hanging noose in his hand and the marks of the rope on his neck, Judas told his tale from the gates of hell, from which the moans and screams (provided by the Omega Drama Group) of those in agony could be heard. Judas reflected on his time with Jesus and told why he had betrayed Him.



In Memory

Louis Ehret, 91, May 2. Member for 59 years and deacon for 40 years of the Elkhart First Brethren Church, where he had served as deacon board president, church treasurer, financial secretary, and benevolent secretary, as well as terms as president, vice president, secretary and treasurer of the Laymen's Organization. He received the church's Senior Citizen Award in 1984. Services by Pastor Timothy P. Garner.

Helen E. Shively, 77, April 26. Miss Shively was a longtime member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church and served for 33 years (1954–87) as Literature Secretary of the National Woman's Missionary Society. She also attended 76 General Conferences, her mother having first brought her when she was still an infant. At Park Street Church she was a member of the Truthseekers Sunday school class and class secretary for 19 years; a member of the Faith Woman's Missionary Society and literature secretary of that society since its beginning; a participant in the church Sewing Circle; and at one time a fifth grade Sunday school class teacher. A 1939 graduate of Ashland College, she worked her entire 43-year career at the college as reference librarian until her retirement in 1983. She was honored in 1978 as the Outstanding Ashland College Alumna and received an honorary doctor of letters degree from the college in 1985. Her funeral service was held at Park Street Church with Pastor Arden Gilmer and Dr. Charles Munson officiating. A graveside service was conducted by Rev. Kenneth Hunn in Nappanee, Ind.



Lorraine Lentz, 79, March 27. Member since 1974 of the Dayton Hillcrest Brethren Church, where she had sung with the choir, helped with the children's after-school program, and provided scholarships. Services by Pastor Kenneth P. Clarkston.

Stanford Dick, 79, March 14. Member of the Vinco Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Jim Tomb.

Wedding

Dierdré Jones to **Aaron E. Thomas**, March 16, at the Peru First Brethren Church; Rev. James L. Thomas, father of the groom, officiating. Members of the Loree Brethren Church.

Membership Growth

Gretna: 2 by baptism

New Lebanon: 4 by transfer

Pleasant View: 1 by baptism, 1 by transfer

Northwest Chapel: 6 by baptism, 2 by transfer

THERE IS A RUMOR going around that the Crusader program has ended.



IT'S NOT TRUE!

As you can see from pages 11–13 of this issue, twenty-one Brethren young people will be serving as Crusaders during this summer of 1994. Ten will serve as Crusader Interns and eleven as District Crusaders.

What we don't have this summer are the traditional Summer Crusader teams. In fact, we are in the process of reviewing the entire Crusader program to be even more effective in the future in helping Brethren young people discern and respond to God's call to ministry. Your support for the Crusader program this month will help us in directing this summer's program and in planning for the future.

Thank you for your prayers throughout the summer . . . and thank you for your financial support this month. Send your gift to:

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The Brethren Church, Inc.
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Ashland, OH 44805

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1 Peter 2:9

1994 General Conference Theme Logo

Seeing God's Hand at Work

Held in the Arms of the Shepherd

By Esther M. Mishler

THE DREADED NEWS was hinted at by a phone call I received while I was at the office working. An appointment with the surgeon a day later verified that tests showed signs of breast cancer.

Many women face this news annually. But when you are the one who becomes a statistic for any catastrophic illness, the bottom drops out of your world. Family and friends offered consolation and reassurance. In conversations we ignored the word *cancer*, and I was very naive about follow-up treatment that might be required if the surgery proved successful.

Prayers were offered on my behalf, and Pastor Don Rowser led me through some agonizing moments with scripture and prayer. A lot of people told me how brave I was. Little did they realize that on the inside, I was fearful of the outcome. Somehow it was possible to appear strong, and I went mechanically about the business of the many tests and X-rays.

On December 2, 1992, my husband drove me to the hospital. In my room, wearing hospital garb, I felt tense. My faith told me that God was looking out for me, but it was proving difficult to let go of my efforts to feel in control of this situation.

Soon the double doors opened and a nurse accompanied me into the operating room. "Lord, this is it. Keep me in your care." As the anesthetic took effect, I recalled my favorite scripture from childhood—the 23rd Psalm. It seemed quite important for me to concentrate on those words, "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want."

Oh, I'm slipping away. It's too late! But an impression of strength came to me with the words, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil . . . ."

When I awoke to the loving greetings of my husband and daughters, my mind relaxed as the words "for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" floated into my consciousness. Something much greater than my expectations had taken place.

The doctor explained that in addition to the mastectomy, 18 lymph nodes had been removed. The prognosis sounded good, even though I faced a series of chemotherapy and radiation treatments.

For several months, my thinking processes didn't respond as they had in the past, and I tired easily. An early retirement proved to be a blessing in disguise. Many days I found special meaning in the goodness and mercy promised in Psalm 23. Being home gave me a peaceful recuperation. Eventually I felt strong enough to reach out to others in need.

Now when faced with problems beyond my control, I offer praise that the true meaning of the Shepherd's Psalm was given to me in my moment of crisis. I may feel helpless, but the Heavenly Father provides strength and serenity, and He remains in charge at all times. Hopefully, I'm able to reflect that loving promise daily in each encounter that God sends my way. [⇧]

Mrs. Mishler is a member of the Goshen, Ind., First Brethren Church. She indicated in a separate note that her treatments for cancer have been completed and that her prognosis is good. She added, "Since we feel that prayers from our church family had a lot do with these events, it is appropriate that I relay my experience to others regarding the secure feeling [I had] of being held in the arms of the Shepherd. Although unable to go to a mission field, I know that in many small ways there are things I can do to assist others who may be ill or in need."

What Has God Done in Your Life?

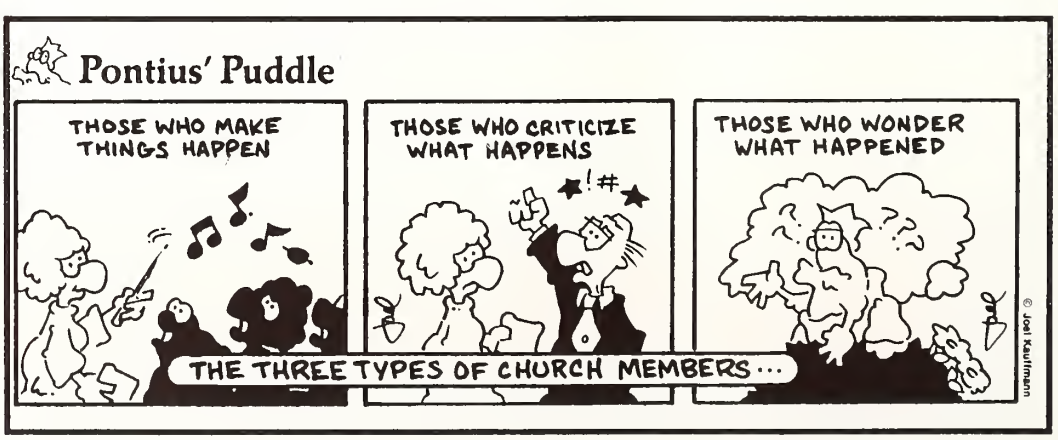
Have you seen the hand of God at work in your life in a special way? Has He done a wondrous thing for you? Have you received a particular answer to prayer?

If so, you are encouraged to share your experience with other Brethren people through the pages of the EVANGELIST.

Write out your experience as simply and as clearly as possible, but don't worry about producing a polished article. (It will be edited as necessary.) A maximum of 500 words is suggested. Typewritten articles are preferred, but handwritten manuscripts are acceptable.

When you have completed the article, send it to:

Richard Winfield, Editor
The Brethren Evangelist
524 College Ave.
Ashland, OH 44805



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Cover: The theme logo for this year's General Conference was designed by Robin Roberts, a graphic artist who is a member of Park Street Brethren Church in Ashland, Ohio. Special information about General Conference is found on pages 13, 14, and the back cover of this issue. A Conference registration form is printed on page 15.

Answer to the Little Crusader page:

"Give thanks to the Lord for he is good. His love lasts forever."

Ministerial Recruitment:

What It's Not; What It Is; and Doing It.

By Charles R. Munson

What It's Not

MINISTERIAL RECRUITMENT is not "calling" persons to be ministers. All Christian are that. We are all ministers in the church because we are all "called into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor. 1:9).

And we all serve (minister) for our Lord. It could be said, therefore, that ministerial recruitment is urging all Christians to use their gifts, and that in a sense would be true to the term. But that is not what is generally meant by **ministerial recruitment.**

Nor is **ministerial recruitment** "calling" persons to be doctors or lawyers or mechanics. Every doctor, lawyer, or mechanic who repents, responds in faith, and enters the Christian fellowship is then a *Christian* doctor, lawyer, or mechanic. Paul, for example, was "called" to be an apostle, but he was not "called" to be a maker of tents. That was secondary. In 1 Corinthians 7:22 ff., where Paul says that a slave is to remain in his "calling," it does not mean to remain a slave now that he has become a believer. Rather it means to remain faithful to his new-found faith in Christ. The Bible does not call people to secular employment; rather they regard their employment as being under God's guidance and for His glory.

What It Is

Ministerial Recruitment is aiding persons to identify a "call" to preaching, missionary service, educational ministry, or other service in the church. Out of the ministry which every Christian performs, some persons are "called" to particular offices of ministry, believing that this is the will of God for their lives. Further, those who lay hands for ordination upon these people are acting as agents of the church—indeed, as agents of Christ in His body, the church.

Aiding a person to hear the "still, small voice" does not negate the "call"; it only makes it clearer. In fact, it is the duty of members of a congregation to help make clear to a person what God may be leading that person to become in ministry. Of course, this is true whatever a person's "gift" may be. But in the case of **ministerial recruitment**, it refers to those "called" to be set apart for service through which, generally, they earn their living from the church.

Ministerial Emphasis Month

June is Ministerial Emphasis month in The Brethren Church. During the month, we have a two-pronged emphasis on full-time Christian service.

First, each year the first Sunday of June (June 5th this year) is designated as "Ministerial Recruitment Sunday." On that day Brethren churches are urged to emphasize ministerial recruitment in their worship services and pastors are encouraged to present a message on some aspect of full-time Christian service.

Second, June is also the month for emphasizing the Ministerial Student Aid Fund. This is a fund administered by a committee of the National Association of Brethren Church Elders. Money in the fund goes to Brethren college and seminary students who are preparing for full-time Christian service in The Brethren Church. The money is to help them with the cost of their education. During June, churches are asked to receive a special offering for this fund and/or to include an amount for this fund in their church budgets.

Doing It

Now, who does this helping? Certainly the **family** plays a key role. This can and does go both ways. Persons can be discouraged by the family when the family leadership neglects basic Christian values in the home. And many families don't want even to think about a child of theirs entering a full-time Christian vocation. "There is no money in it."

On the other hand, families (mothers generally lead in this) can encourage children to think about God's claim on their lives for Christian service. Fathers are second in influence, some studies show. But overall, family influence and training offer the most influence.

Other persons who play a key role in bringing individuals to a decision about the "call" are **pastors**. While families have tremendous powers to influence, the pastor exerts an equal or sometimes even greater influence upon this decision. Pastors who have been successful at recruiting have done so by keeping the challenge of church service paramount in the minds of the members of the congregation. Young and older need to hear what the world needs and how they can offer Christ as the answer to that need.

One pastor has said, "No student graduates from high school who has not been presented with a call to Christian service." This pastor has a personal interview with each high school student in that person's senior year or before. Future leaders must be sought out and enabled to "hear" and "see." This is what **ministerial recruitment** means.

Likewise, the **congregation** must be an enlisting agency. Per-

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Dr. Munson, former professor at Ashland University and Ashland Theological Seminary and former dean of the seminary, is now retired.

sons ought to be looking for, listening to, and asking questions of the young and the older who show signs of leadership. There must also be prayer for laborers. Jesus said so. **Ministerial recruitment** means seeking and finding and praying. Or praying and seeking and finding.

Local congregations cannot escape the responsibility resting on them to see that their people are made aware of the claims of Christ for church vocations. A church can have its best people if it wants them. **Ministerial recruitment can help.**

So: families should have an atmosphere in the home in which a "call" to Christian vocations is considered before careers are sought in other fields.

So: pastors ought to have a "garden" of persons who are being cultivated, helped to hear a possible "call" of God. The greatest waste is persons who have never been challenged and who seek careers in secular fields first.

So: what kind of program does your congregation have? Do you pray? Do you seek? Do you find? Do you at least encourage persons to consider church vocations? **Do you?** Say yes! "The fields are ready for harvest." For example: One billion Muslims in the world, one-half—five hundred million—of whom are under age fifteen. [⇧]

How to do More Than Just *Talk* About Prayer

By Kenneth Hunn

In seasons of distress and grief,
My soul has often found relief,
And oft escaped the tempter's snare,
By thy return, sweet hour of prayer.

IT HAS OFTEN BEEN SAID that everyone talks about the weather, but no one does anything about it. I'm sure the same could be said about prayer. How often do we only talk, teach, preach, and sing about prayer without doing anything about it—without actually praying?

The words above from the hymn "Sweet Hour of Prayer" have been sung untold thousands of times by millions and millions of Christians. But how many of us can actually speak from experience of the joy of an uninterrupted *hour* of speaking and listening to our Heavenly Father?

A part of the beauty of this hymn is that it suggests that the author (William W. Walford) has regularly practiced prayer. Prayer for him has been more than an infrequent event, practiced only in times of crisis or of great need. Prayer, unlike the weather, is something we actually can—and must—do something about.



Where do you find yourself today in relation to the personal practice of prayer. Pastor, how effective are you not only in teaching and preaching about prayer, but also at modeling it and in helping those in your congregation to actually experience the transforming power of talking with God.

Here are a few ideas for making prayer an effective part of your life within the Body of Christ.

Preaching about prayer

The obvious starting point for developing the prayer-life of the church is to make it a part of the preaching in the congregation. Pastor, if you're like me, you've preached every year of your ministry on the topic of prayer. Perhaps some years you have even devoted an entire sermon series to the subject of the practice of prayer in the life of the church family. In my own situation, we've determined that we will spend half of every year preaching and teaching about the inner life and prayer.

People need consistent preaching about prayer over a period of time. But they also need variety. So we may use different terminology and approaches, but the central focus is always on developing our inward spiritual life, of which prayer is a key element. *(continued, next page)*

Rev. Hunn is pastor of the First Brethren Church of Nappanee, Indiana.

This year our themes were "The Real You" and "Discovering Life From the Inside Out." Both themes speak creatively to issues of the heart or the inner life, of which prayer is a key element. So pastor, preach it, but do so creatively. And by all means, make sure that the sermon is relevant and that its message can be put to use in the believer's life immediately.

Teaching and modeling

Preaching is important. But so also is teaching. How long has it been since prayer was the focus of the teaching ministry of your Sunday school? I've heard many *sermons* on prayer, but little teaching on this subject throughout the rest of the church's ministry. If our goal is a praying church, we need to go at it in earnest and from all directions!

Another key way to effectively develop the practice of prayer in the Body of Christ is through leadership and modeling. The Scriptures tell us that Jesus' disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray. Their request was prompted in part by the fact that John the Baptist had taught his disciples to pray, but it was also prompted by Jesus' practice of prayer in His own life (Luke 11:1).

In the same way today, teaching on prayer is most effective when prayer is consistently modeled in the classroom, the meeting room, and the worship service. Teachers, pray for your students in their presence, and help them to learn to do the same for one another. Pray at the beginning of your class session to set the tone for your time together. When the Holy Spirit breaks through during your lesson convincing you of His love and His power, stop right then and thank Him for who He is and for what He has done. Pray, too, at the conclusion of your class time to help students begin to practice what they have learned.

Pastor, when you pray during the worship service, don't forget that you are praying on behalf of everyone. Your task is to connect the hearts of the members of the congregation with your own heart and with the heart of God. Work at this. Write out your prayers if that helps. Don't take this responsibility lightly. Have the congregation sing a hymn or chorus before your prayer to prepare their hearts for communicating with the Father. Or sing following the prayer to add conviction to your words. Plan ahead for prayer, be creative, and teach the congregation to pray in a variety of worship settings.

In other church meetings, board and committee chairs and group leaders all need to model authentic prayer. Forget the 20-second ritual at the beginning of meetings and spend time instead really praying over the agenda. And how about praying at the end of the meeting as well? That's when the real work begins, so the power of prayer is urgently needed.

By every means possible

Prayer groups, prayer vigils, prayer conferences, prayer concerts, adult prayer groups, children's prayer time, youth prayer groups, men's prayer breakfasts, women's prayer lunches . . . all are needed. There are many ways to develop prayer in the life of the church. But above all, pray! Perhaps the next time you sing that familiar hymn, you can sing from your heart out of the experience of knowing the sweetness of an hour spent in prayer! [⇧]

Getting Started on a Sweet Hour of Prayer

Just as a journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step (or more likely, with getting into the car), having a "sweet hour of prayer" begins with learning to spend 10 to 15 minutes in prayer. With that in mind, here are some suggestions for getting started.

- **Find a quiet place and a suitable time.** It's hard to talk with anyone when there are a lot of distractions. It's even harder when talking to the unseen God. So a quiet place is important. As to the time, someone has said that the best time to pray is when *you* are at your best. Morning is the "traditional" time for devotions, but if you are not a morning person, you might do better at midday, evening, or night. When you can find a *quiet place* may also determine when is a *suitable time.*
- **Remember that prayer is *talking with God.*** Fancy language isn't required (but respect is appropriate). Speak naturally, as you would to a respected friend. You don't need any special prayer jargon to talk to your *Father* in Heaven.
- **Expect to feel awkward.** Feeling awkward doesn't indicate a lack of faith. It is the result of lack of experience. Don't get discourage. You will gain confidence as you keep at it.
- **Consider praying aloud.** This helps you keep your mind from wondering, and it also reminds you that you are *talking* with Someone, and not just "thinking." But if you find this too difficult, try just mouthing the words. And if even that doesn't work, just pray silently.
- **Spend time listening.** Ask God to guide your thinking, and then allow Him to bring thoughts to your mind. Remember, however, to check these leadings with common sense, Scripture, and in some cases with trusted Christian friends.
- **Start a prayer notebook.** Write down your requests and God's answers. These will be a source of encouragement as you look back and see how you have grown in your prayer life and the exciting ways in which God has answered your prayers.
- **Find a prayer partner.** This is someone to whom you will be accountable and who will help you stick to your prayer program.
- **Just do it.** Make a commitment with yourself and with God to begin praying daily. Even *you* can be a man or woman of prayer. But don't put it off until next week or next month. Chances are you will never get to it.

— Editor Dick Winfield

A number of the above ideas came from a newsletter article written some years ago by Rev. Roger Stogsdill, who is now pastor of the Northgate Community Brethren Church in Manteca, Calif.

Ten Commandments of Tightwaddery

By Jeri Millhouse

IN THE PAST, being called a *tightwad* was an insult. The term conjured up images of a miserly old man, unwilling to part with any of his money for the good of others or even to benefit himself.

Now, however, tightwaddery has come of age! It has become a curious mix of science and sport—a strategic contest with oneself to become the best one can be at bargain hunting and recycling in order to preserve both the family and the earth. And for Christians, it has become a means to accomplish things of eternal value.

I was a tightwad long before tightwaddery was chic. My tightwaddery was born out of necessity, and I remember the days of feeling deprived as I grudgingly pinched another penny until it screamed.

But now, as a wife, homemaker, and mother of two small children, I have gained a new perspective. For me, tightwaddery truly has been transformed from drudgery into sport. It is no longer something I must do; it is something I choose to enjoy doing in order to meet my goals and maintain my priorities.

There are days, though, when I feel like an alien. After my last trip to a nearby mall, I became depressed and felt that I never wanted to go to a mall again as long as I lived. I wasn't depressed because I couldn't buy anything; rather, I was dismayed to think that so many people would actually consider paying $80 for a sweater "on clearance."

Why has materialism captured the hearts of so many people. I believe God's word is clear that what we own is not a measure of who we are. And God clearly states where our affections should lie. In Matthew 6:19–21* we read:

> Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Colossians 3:1–3 adds:

> Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

And in Proverbs 4:23, we are admonished:

> Above all else, guard your heart,
> for it is the wellspring of life.

I am sure that my desires, priorities, and goals differ from those of many who will read this. It is not my intent to be judgmental of anyone and of the choices they are making regarding their lifestyle. It *is* my intent, however, to challenge each reader to sincerely ask God to place desires within you that reflect "the mind of Christ" (see 1 Cor. 2:6–16).

Many times having the mind of Christ will look pretty "peculiar" to unbelievers (see Titus 2:11–14). Personally, I have been criticized many times for some of my lifestyle choices. But I know that the sacrifices I have made reflect the mind of Christ for *me*, and I am thankful that God has inspired my tightwaddery as a means of maintaining these priorities.

Having set forth the "whys" of my tightwaddery, let's move on to the "hows." I must give credit at this point to a woman who truly has been an inspiration to me. He name is Amy Dacyczyn, and she has written a book entitled *The Tightwad Gazette* (Villard Books, 1992), which I highly recommend. She also compiles a monthly newsletter by the same name, which can be obtained by sending your name, address, and $12 to *The Tightwad Gazette*, R.R. 1, Box 3570, Leeds, ME 04263.

1. Thou shalt practice good tightwad ethics.

Let's first establish what tightwaddery is *not*.

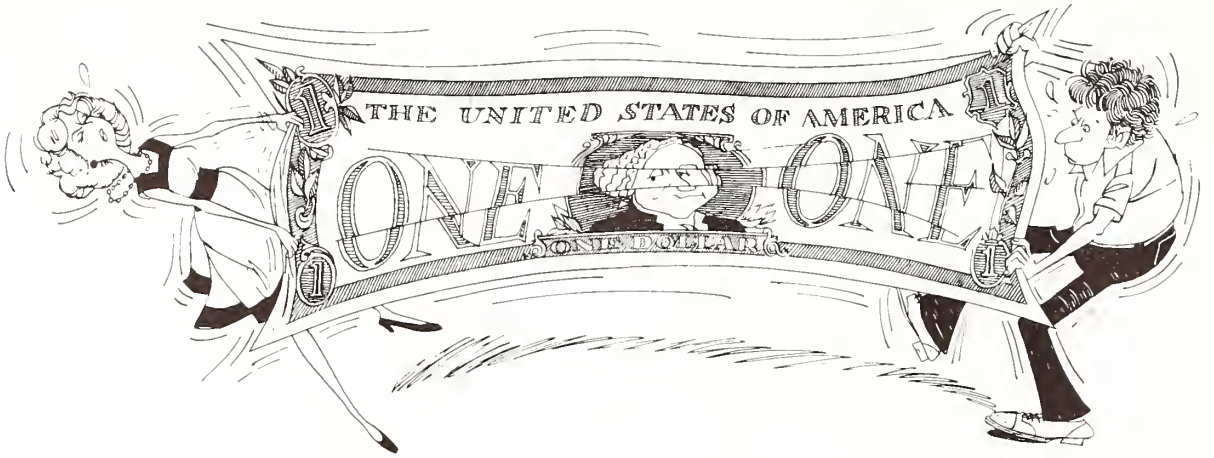
A. People who snitch from restaurants are not tightwads—they are snitches. They take anything from sugar packets to napkins because they think they "paid for it." And they usually leave a lousy tip.

Instead, tightwads save money by ordering water instead of soft drinks, by eating out at lunch rather than for dinner, by eating half their meal and bringing home half for the next day's lunch. And they tip generously,

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Mrs. Millhouse is a member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church. She works part time as a legal secretary and operates a Melaleuca business (household, nutritional, and personal-care products) out of her home. Her husband, Scot, is a carpenter for Ashland University. They have two sons, Tyler (6) and Preston (3).

*Quotations from the Bible are from the *New International Version*.



based on the quality of service received.

B. People who save *everything* because they "might need it someday" are not tightwads. They are pack rats!

My personal experience tells me that pack-ratism is an inherited condition. It takes hard work to break the habit. But we must force ourselves to get rid of things that clutter our homes and litter our lives. A good rule of thumb is to get rid of anything you haven't used in one or two years (including those size 5 dresses, high school athletic clothes, broken appliances, unfinished crafts, and that cupboard full of margarine tubs).

C. People who pinch pennies to the detriment of others are not tightwads. They are Scrooges.

I think the Golden Rule applies here. This means that frugality must *not* put an end to family fun. Having fun is much less expensive than divorce proceedings or counseling for troubled children. It is also important to take measures to prevent children from feeling deprived. Make tightwaddery fun for them. My children adore garage sales because I occasionally give them a quarter or so to buy a treasure. They are also learning that they will not die if they do not have Nintendo!

2. Thou shalt determine priorities and set goals.

It is important that goals be prayerfully determined and then written down. Perhaps you want to build a house or become debt-free or give more to missions. Be as specific as possible in terms of how much money will be needed and the date each goal will be accomplished.

Next, you need a plan to reach your goal. It is important that your strategies be in line with your priorities. Try to strike a balance by asking the following:

1. What do I need to be doing now to reach this goal?
2. What am I willing to sacrifice to maintain quality family relationships?

For example, you may want to pay off your mortgage in ten years instead of 20, but you would have to give up all family vacations to do so. Opting to pay off the mortgage in 15 years might be more in keeping with your priority of having family fun and togetherness.

The final (and most painful!) step in this process is to keep a *written* budget. To start, it is a good idea to write down *all* expenditures, no matter how small, in order to find out exactly where your money is going and where cuts can be made. For two-income families, this is also a good time to ascertain how much income a second income is really generating once you consider taxes, child care, convenience foods, transportation, wardrobe, etc. Also, try brainstorming a list of "Things we could do to save money if one of us did not work outside the home or worked outside the home less." You may find that the value of that second income is actually much less than you thought.

3. Thou shalt strive never to pay full price for anything.

For grocery shopping, I have come to the conclusion that it is absolutely necessary to shop at more than one store in order to maximize savings. Comparison shopping saves me several hundred dollars per year. Try listing 20 or 30 of your most commonly used grocery items. Then go to two or three stores and write down prices for each item. In time, you will become familiar enough with the prices in the various stores that you will know what things to buy at each place.

When it comes to clothes shopping, buying at garage sales wins hands down! But you need to pay close attention to garage sale ads. Look for words like "multi-family," "name brands," and "designer"; and take note of the location. And remember, if you snooze, you lose! Don't leave your house at noon and go to 20 garage sales and find junk. Leave at 7:30 a.m., go to three or four garage sales in good locations, and come home with treasures.

Thrift shops are also good sources for quality clothing, but expect to pay more than you would at a garage sale. Clearance sales can be good, but you must be able to think a year ahead and to avoid the temptation to buy "trendy" styles.

Another key tightwad concept is what I call "networking"—establishing communication between a circle of friends and acquaintances so that each knows who has needs and who has surplus. We have become so independent and transient that we have gotten far away from the days of "having everything in common" (Acts 2:44, 45). At Park Street Church, we started a "Gleaning Board"—a bulletin board with columns marked "I have . . ." and "I need . . . ." I have experienced that when I am willing to give to others, God blesses me through others when I have needs (Luke 6:38).

Regarding prescription needs, consider generics when available. Also check with your pharmacist to see if your medication is less expensive when purchased in a greater quantity or in a higher milligram tablet that can be split in half.

4. Thou shalt buy things before you really need them.

This sounds like a contradiction to tightwaddery. But the point is, if you find something in good shape at a great price and you know you will need it in the next year or two, go ahead and buy it. Obviously, adequate storage and good organization are a must in order for you to find the item when you need it.

Gradually work with your grocery budget until you have the financial flexibility to buy in bulk. Concentrated cleaning products can save you a bundle. Why pay for water you can get out of your own faucet?

5. Thou shalt become a culinary wizard.

Be persistent and creative in using up leftovers. Consider using half the amount of meat called for in casserole recipes. You'll be cutting the fat *and* the cost. Have a designated freezer container for leftovers that could be used as soup ingredients. When it's full, make soup!

I find that making up a menu for the entire month reduces impulse grocery shopping and eating out. It is also a wise use of time and energy to cook large quantities of meat and to double casserole recipes. Put the extra in the freezer immediately for easy meals on hectic days.

6. Thou shalt remember that little expenditures add up quickly.

A few simple examples will suffice. A can of pop or cup of coffee per workday:

5 x 60¢ x 50 weeks = $150.

Cost of eating out *vs.* packing a lunch:

5 x $3.50 x 50 weeks = $875

vs.

5 x $1.25 x 50 weeks = $312.50.

Savings per year = $562.50

Are you really reading your daily newspaper? Do you need a newspaper (most of which include TV listings) **and** a *TV Guide*? Can you share a magazine subscription with a friend or read the magazine at the library. What about cable television and extras like HBO?

7. Thou shalt take steps to scale down Christmas spending.

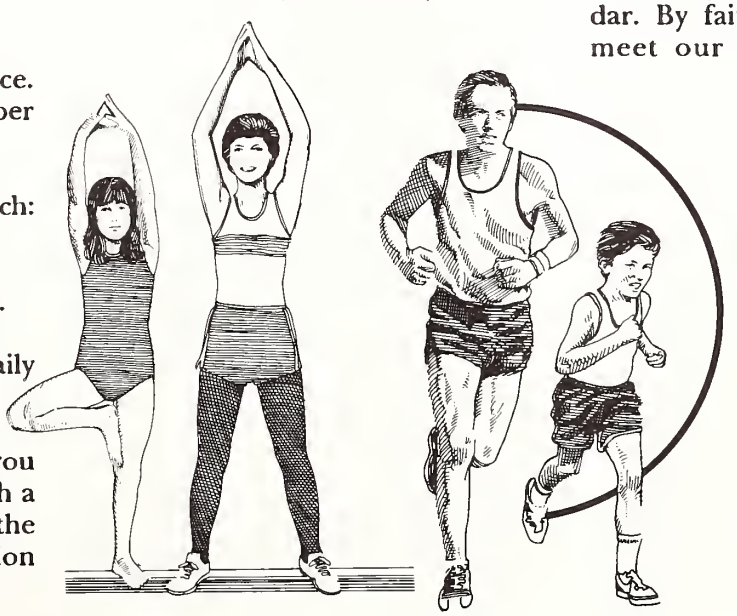
Do you remember a Christmas when you went a bit overboard? Your children turned into little green-eyed monsters, and it took six months to pay off the credit card bills. Take steps to scale down. You can find wonderful presents at garage sales.

Consider giving each child only three gifts, and tie these in with the three gifts presented to the Christchild. Discuss openly and honestly with friends and family your need to scale down. Don't feel pressured to reciprocate dollar for dollar. Plan way ahead to avoid impulse spending. (I start my Christmas shopping on December 26.) And homemade gifts are treasures!

8. Thou shalt maintain optimal health.

With ever-increasing medical costs, NOW is the time to consider wellness. In an age of fast living and fast food, it seems we have neglected preserving our "temples" (1 Cor. 6:19–20).

There are several important keys to wellness: maintaining optimal weight; adopting a low-fat, high-fiber diet; reducing stress; getting regular exercise through aerobic and strength training; having regular checkups and good prenatal care. And my research indicates that vitamins are the cheapest "insurance" you can buy.



9. Thou shalt become financially wise.

If your spouse died tomorrow, would you know your financial assets and liabilities? If you are single and finances are not your strength, could someone in your church teach and advise you? Learn about investments. Consider refinancing a mortgage when interest rates drop. And if credit cards are creating havoc in your home, invest in a nice, sharp pair of scissors!

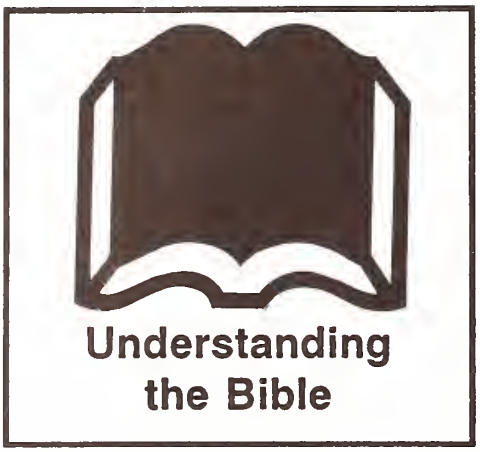


Learn to dicker with sales people. Don't appear to be too impressed or too eager. Always remember, if you don't need it, you've paid too much whatever the price. Beware of sales tactics that are designed to make you feel guilty or fearful. Practice "delayed gratification," and teach your children to do the same.

10. Thou shalt remember Him from whom thy blessings come.

My husband, Scot, and I have always recognized the importance of giving tithes and offerings, and I believe that God has blessed us as He promised (see Malachi 3:8–10). At a particularly difficult time in our lives financially, I kept a blessing calendar. By faith, I was asking God to meet our financial needs, and I wrote down every financial blessing that He sent our way, no matter how large or small. How faith-building it was to look back at that calendar after God brought us through that trying time!

And in closing, I challenge you to put on an attitude of gratitude, "always giving thanks to God the Father for everything" (Eph. 5:20). For He is faithful and worthy of our praise! [✝]



Understanding the Bible

The Relationship of the Old and New Testaments

By Brenda B. Colijn

CHRISTIANS AFFIRM as sacred Scripture one Bible consisting of Old and New Testaments. We have not always agreed, however, about how those testaments relate to one another. This question affects how we interpret individual passages. It also affects how we compare passages with one another, especially when the Old and New Testaments seem to differ. It determines what we decide about certain issues. For example, how much of the Old Testament law applies to Christians? How much should apply to society at large?

Marcion, the second-century heretic, thought that the Old and New Testaments were in opposition to one another. He believed that the Old Testament was not the product of the Christian God. He created his own Bible by throwing out the entire Old Testament and all the New Testament documents except for the letters of Paul and a shortened version of Luke. In response to Marcion, the church affirmed the whole Bible as its book, both the Old Testament and the documents that would become the New Testament.

Two contrasting views

Since that time, Christians have developed several ways to express the relationship between the testaments. The Reformed tradition has emphasized the continuity between them. They express God's dealings with human beings in terms of a continuing covenant or series of covenants. The Christian Reconstruction movement, an outgrowth of the Reformed tradition, emphasizes continuity to the extreme. Reconstructionists believe that Old Testament law applies as directly to Christians as to ancient Israel, and that it should serve as the basis for modern society as a whole.

Dispensationalists, by contrast, have emphasized the discontinuity between Old and New Testaments, because they believe that God has quite separate plans for Israel and the church. Lutherans make a sharp distinction between law (God's requirements) and gospel (God's grace), although they usually see law and gospel in both testaments. Anabaptists and Brethren have expressed the relationship between the testaments as one of promise and fulfillment, with Christ providing the key to understanding both.

Continuity *and* discontinuity

The Bible itself shows both continuity and discontinuity. The New Testament writers consider the Old Testament to be inspired and authoritative. When Paul asserts the inspiration of Scripture in 2 Timothy 3:16, he is thinking primarily of the Old Testament, the Bible of the early church. Similarly, when Jesus says that Scripture cannot be broken, He means the Old Testament (John 10:35).

Yet the New Testament recognizes that something decisive has happened in salvation history since the Hebrew Scriptures were given—namely, the coming of Christ. This event has changed the status of the Hebrew Scriptures, so that Christians now call them the Old Testament. Jesus has instituted a new covenant and has sealed it with His blood, poured out in sacrifice (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25). The book of Hebrews is clear that this new covenant is superior to the old because it has a better mediator (Christ) and is based on better promises (7:22; 8:6). The old covenant was a preparation for it and has now been superseded (8:7–13).

Jesus is the climax of God's self-revelation: "In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe" (Heb. 1:1–2; *NIV*). He is the fulfillment of all God's promises (2 Cor. 1:20) and the culmination of all God's plans (Eph. 1:9–10).

A Christ-centered approach

Because of His pre-eminence, Jesus must be central to our understanding of both testaments. The New Testament writers show Jesus as the fulfillment of prophecy (Mt. 1:22–23; 2:15, 17–18; Acts 2:30–33; 1 Cor. 15:3–8; 1 Pet. 1:10–12; 2 Pet. 1:19). Jesus Himself said that He had come to fulfill both the law and the prophets (Mt. 5:17). He taught that all the Old Testament points to Him (John 5:39–40; Luke 24:27, 44).

Furthermore, Jesus claimed to have the authority to reinterpret the Old Testament: "You have heard it said . . . but I say to you" (Mt. 5:21–22, etc.). He told the Pharisees that Moses' instructions on divorce were an allowance for the hardness of human hearts —suggesting that God's word in the Old Testament sometimes met people where they were rather than giving universal principles (Mt. 19:8). But Jesus expressed those universal principles, sometimes by going back to God's original intention (such as for marriage; Mt. 19:4–9) and sometimes by setting a new standard (such as Jesus' command to love as He has loved us; John 13:34–35). To understand the relationship between the testaments, we should take our cue from Jesus.

A Christ-centered approach to Scripture does not mean reading all

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Dr. Colijn is a member of the Smoky Row Brethren Church in Worthington, Ohio. She chairs The Brethren Church's Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication, which is preparing this series of articles.

of the Old Testament as prophecies of Christ or seeing types of Christ in all the details of the Old Testament. We should understand Old Testament passages in their own historical contexts before relating them to the New Testament.

Jesus is the key

This approach does mean that since Jesus Christ is the culmination of salvation history, the fulfillment of Old Testament messianic prophecy, the final and complete revelation of God, the foundation of the people of God, and the supreme interpreter of God's intentions, He is the key to understanding the Bible as a whole. Thus, for Christians, the authority of the Old Testament is mediated through Christ.

The early Brethren used both Old and New Testaments, but they gave final authority to the New because it contained the instructions of their Lord. Alexander Mack summarized the gospel as follows: "Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords, desired that we do what we are doing—that the sinner shall repent and believe in the Lord Jesus and should be baptized in water upon his confession of faith. He should then seek to carry out everything Jesus has commanded and publicly bequeathed in His Testament." Mack believed that the New Testament was the outward form of the law of the new covenant which the Holy Spirit had written on believers' hearts.

Mack and the other early Brethren still used the Old Testament whenever it spoke to an issue, especially as a source of moral instruction and as a pointer to Christ. Sometimes in this latter use they failed to give enough attention to the original historical context. But this failing was common to all Christian groups at that time.

Correspondence Welcomed

The members of the General Conference Executive Council's Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication invite readers to suggest topics or Bible passages to discuss in future articles in this column. Send questions, comments, or suggestions to the committee in care of The Brethren Evangelist, 524 College Ave., Ashland, OH 44805.

More recently, some have felt that the Brethren motto ("The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible") and the popular Brethren slogan "No creed but the New Testament" say contradictory things about the relationship between the testaments. Neither slogan, however, really addresses that issue at all. Both were intended to emphasize that Scripture itself (not human reason, decisions, cultures, or creeds) is the final source of authority for the Brethren.

For Brethren today, as for Christians in general, the practical issue is how much of the Old Testament applies to us—and how do we apply it? One common approach is to say that everything in the Old Testament is binding on Christians unless the New Testament says it isn't. The other common approach is to say that nothing in the Old Testament is binding on Christians unless the New Testament says it is.

A balanced approach

I would suggest a balanced approach that recognizes both the inspiration of the Old Testament and the centrality of Christ. Such an approach would acknowledge what has changed because of Christ.

Because of Christ, nothing in the Old Testament is binding on us *as law*. Those commandments regulated the covenant between God and ancient Israel. We are under a new covenant (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25). We are free from the law (Gal. 3:25; 5:1) because we are not under law but under grace (Rom. 6:14). The early church affirmed that Gentiles do not have to keep the Old Testament law in order to be Christians (Acts 15:1–29).

Jesus Himself specifically affirmed some of the Old Testament commandments, such as the two greatest commandments, love of God and love of neighbor (Mt. 22:34–40). He strengthened others, such as the commandments against murder and adultery (Mt. 5:21–30). He abolished some, such as the laws of clean and unclean foods (Mark 7:19). Furthermore, His death on the cross, as a perfect and final sacrifice, did away with the need for the Old Testament sacrificial system (Heb. 9:23—10:18).

In trying to apply an Old Testament passage or command, we should ask in what way it applies to us *in Christ*. Has Jesus abolished it, affirmed it, strengthened it, applied it in a new way? Have the New Testament writers told us how we should understand it in light of the coming of Christ? Where we have no specific guidance on this point, we should try to understand the passage in the context of the whole of Jesus' message, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

A balanced approach would also acknowledge that the Old Testament is still inspired Scripture. Even though it does not apply to us as law, we can still learn a great deal from it. In 2 Timothy 3:16–17, Paul specifically tells us how to use the Old Testament: "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." Elsewhere, he says that it is written to teach us, in order to give us encouragement (Rom. 15:4) and to warn us against sinful behavior (1 Cor. 10:11).

The Old Testament is the record of God's words and deeds in history, the story of His relationship with His people and of His gracious plans for the world. God's character and purposes have not changed. The Old Testament can therefore teach us about God and about human nature, and show us how God deals with His people and with the world. It can also awaken us to our heritage as spiritual children of Abraham (Gal. 3:6–9), give us models of relating to God, provide moral guidance, and show us God's gracious preparation for salvation in Christ.

Two acts in a drama

Old and New Testaments represent two acts in the unfolding drama of God's self-revelation to humanity. They have an organic relationship. As C.F. Yoder, missionary, scholar, and Evangelist editor, observed in 1905, "[the] New Testament is enfolded in the Old as a flower is enfolded in a bud."

When we read and teach from the Bible, let us not, like Marcion, ignore or depreciate the Old Testament. But let us remember to give Jesus Christ His due as the Lord of Scripture, as well as of our lives. [⇧]

Rodeo Round-Up Sunday and Friend Day Are "Hot" Events at Tucson First Brethren Church

Tucson, Ariz. — While much of the country was buried in ice and snow and experiencing arctic-like temperatures during the winter of 1994, two very "hot" events were taking place at the First Brethren Church of Tucson.

February 27 was "Rodeo Round-Up Sunday" at the Tucson Church, in conjunction with Tucson's week-long celebration of "La Fiesta De Los Vaqueros" (rodeo days). Western clothes were the fashion of the day, as members and guests assembled for a western-style worship service. Tucson Pastor Bill Brady, wearing his new bolo string tie, spoke on "what we need around here," challenging the congregation to make the church a place of excitement, caring, and reaching out. The Brethren had already begun doing so, as evidenced by an attendance of 106, six more than the goal of 100 set for the day.



The crowd of 126 who attended the Tucson Church on Friend Day surpassed the goal for the day of 125.

Following the service, the Brethren enjoyed an old-fashioned western bar-b-que in the church courtyard. While the fellowship around the tables was the highlight of this event, many of the adults also enjoyed playing horseshoes or panning for gold. Others just tried to escape the near-90-degree "winter" weather. The children amused themselves by taking horse rides in the church parking lot or panning for gold, and by just generally having a great time.

The planners for this special event were committee members Tim Cook, Ed Lane, Kristen Cook, and Mary Stamper, chaired by Lyle and Candy Dreyer.

The next "hot" event on the Tucson Church schedule was Friend Month in April, culminating in Friend Day—with an attendance goal of 125—on the last Sunday of the month. In preparation for this special day, the church family developed a Friend Day prayer chain. The chain consisted of links of church members who pledged to be present for Friend Day. Added to these were other links—people for whom the original links were praying that they too would be present on April 24. Eventually 206 links were added to the chain.

Leading up to Friend Day, April 10 was observed as "Joggin' Shoe Sunday," when each of the church members was asked to wear jogging shoes to Sunday services, symbolizing the fact that the congregation was "off and running" toward Friend Day. Special recognition was given to those who had the newest, oldest, most expensive, and cheapest jogging shoes, as well as to those who went out and bought a pair just for that day.

On the following Sunday, April 17, Rev. Russ Gordon, Director of U.S. Ministries and Church Growth for The Brethren Church, was the featured speaker. He brought a message from the Book of Jonah challenging the Tucson Brethren to adopt God's priority of reaching the lost.

The day also featured a visit from Blueford and Marthenia (Scott and Gwen McKinney). Blueford was looking for a guest to invite for Friend Day and was calling everyone in the phone book. He had worked his way down the listings to Bill Brady, but Marthenia felt he was probably too shiftless to come.

Finally, the much-anticipated day arrived! Friend Day began with a fellowship continental breakfast and Sunday school. The Sunday school hour featured a Kids versus Adults contest to see which group had the most in attendance. The losing group had to provide special music during the worship hour. The children worked hard and had a good crowd, including eleven guests. The adults, however, had an even bigger crowed (though not as many guests), so won the competition.

As a result the worship hour featured special music by the children, plus additional music by guest musician Holli Schafe from Gilbert, Ariz., and by Lynne Brady and son Bill. The service also included a time of introduction of the many guests present, and Pastor Brady's message, "Why Invite My Friends to Church?" But the highlight of the hour was the 126 people present, thus surpassing the goal for the day.

"Our Lord has challenged us to reach the lost of Tucson," says Pastor Brady. "We are blessed with a beautiful city, a great location, and the mandate of our Savior. The heat is on to do the job that Christ has called us to do."

The planning committee for the Friend Day emphasis included Rev. Bill and Fran Curtis, Gordon and Mary Roberts, Ina Williams, Doris Stogsdill, Flora Foreman, Pastor Bill and Lynne Brady, and co-chairs Jim and Ellen Fisher. In addition to the special Sundays during Friend Month, each week during the month had a special emphasis. April 3–10 was "Drop a Card Week" (send a card to a friend and encourage that friend to come to church); April 10–16 was "Make a Call Week" (call that friend and invite him or her to church); April 17–23 was "Make a Visit Week" (visit that friend); and April 24–30 was "Thank You Time" (thank that friend for coming).

— reported by Pastor Bill Brady

1994 General Conference Schedule

Theme: "Called to Declare" (1 Peter 2:9)

August 8–12, at Ashland University, Ashland, Ohio

Monday, August 8
6:30 p.m. — Opening Celebration featuring address by Moderator Russell Gordon
8:30 p.m. — Fellowship and refreshments

Tuesday, August 9
8:30 a.m. — Devotional/Corporate Prayer
9:00 a.m. — Business Session
12:00 noon — World Relief Soup Luncheon (reservation required)
1:30 p.m. — Auxiliary Sessions (WMS, BMOM, NABCE)
7:00 p.m. — Worship, featuring Seeker-Sensitive Service, and speaker Tom Youngblood

Wednesday, August 10
7:00 a.m. — Pastors' Wives Fellowship/ Continental Breakfast (reservation required)
8:30 a.m. — Devotional/Corporate Prayer
9:00 a.m. — All-Conference Outreach Seminar led by Tom Youngblood, Part I
1:30 p.m. — All-Conference Outreach Seminar led by Tom Youngblood, Part II
7:00 p.m. — Worship, featuring Concert of Prayer led by Ashland Theological Seminary
9:00 p.m. — Crusader Review

Thursday, August 11
8:30 a.m. — Devotional/Corporate Prayer
9:00 a.m. — Business Session
12:00 noon — Women's Luncheon (reservation required)
12:00 noon — Men's Picnic (reservation required)
2:30 p.m. — Auxiliary Sessions
5:00 p.m. — Missionary Board Banquet (reservation required)
7:15 p.m. — Missionary Board Program

Friday, August 12
8:30 a.m. — Devotional/Corporate Prayer
9:00 a.m. — Business Session
10:45 a.m. — Challenge by new Moderator Reilly Smith

Thomas L. Youngblood to Speak at Conference

Thomas L. Youngblood, Director of U.S. Ministries for International Bible Society, will be the featured speaker at the evening worship service on Tuesday evening of General Conference. He will also lead an all-Conference outreach seminar on Wednesday morning and afternoon.

Youngblood has been with the International Bible Society (IBS), headquartered in Colorado Springs, Colorado, since 1986, when he joined the society to develop its "Love Your Neighbor to Life" seminar. He later became Director of U.S. Ministries for IBS. Other parts of the U.S. Ministries department include Scripture grants, ministry forums (such as the Church Planters Forum) evangelism initiatives, and the New York Bible Society.

Before joining IBS, Youngblood worked with Gospel Light Publications for seven years, and prior to that he was on the pastoral staff of a church in New York City for seven years. He has a B.S. degree from Philadelphia College of the Bible, an M.A. degree from Wheaton College, and is currently finishing work on an Ed.D. degree.

In addition to his responsibilities with IBS, he serves on the Board of Directors for The Family Inn, a Colorado Springs ministry to homeless and hurting families, and he serves on the executive committee of the Colorado Springs Leadership Prayer Breakfast. He is a member of Woodmen Valley Chapel, where he has taught adult Sunday school classes.



Thomas L. Youngblood

The "Love Your Neighbor to Life" seminar, which Youngblood will be presenting at Conference, is an approach to friendship evangelism. The seminar has become an integral part of the ministry of IBS in the U.S. Nearly 30,000 people have attended the seminar since its inception. It has recently been translated into Spanish, and is receiving high marks in both the U.S. and Latin America.

Brethren attending Conference should attend both the morning and afternoon sessions of the seminar to receive the full benefit of the training.

General Conference Preview

1994 National BYIC Convention

Theme: Lighten the Darkness (2 Cor. 4:5–7)

August 8–12 at Ashland University

The National BYIC Convention will be held on the Ashland University campus again this year. Though on the same campus, the Youth Convention will be independent of the adult Conference.

The Youth will have their own worship services Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, with Wednesday's focus being on missions. Prasanth and Nirmala Kumar and Allen Baer will be participating in this service. The Youth will also have their own Communion service on Thursday evening. They will join the adults for worship on Monday and Thursday evenings and for the closing worship service on Friday morning. Adults will have the opportunity to join the youth Wednesday night at 9:00 for the Crusader Review.

Other events on the schedule include the annual Coffeehouse, comedian Bob Stromberg, tubing down the Mohican River, workshops, an obstacle course, Christian videos and pizza party, as well as daily Morning Praise and Share and Prayer groups.

Pre-Convention Planning Handbooks were sent in January, and Convention registration information was mailed to advisors and pastors in early May. All youth attending the Convention must pre-register. No walk-in registrations will be accepted at the Convention. The absolute last date to register is July 15, and a discount is available to those whose registrations are postmarked before July 1. Additional discounts are available if youth are National BYIC members or have memorized 2 Corinthians 4.

All youth at the Convention must stay on campus (women in Myers, men in Kilhefner). **There will be no commuters**, and attendance is mandatory at all Convention events. The registration fee includes four nights of housing (Monday through Thursday); therefore, any youth or youth sponsors who will arrive Sunday must register with adult housing for Sunday night.

Conference Registration Information

Every person planning to attend Conference must complete a registration form (next page)—even if you live in Ashland or are not planning to stay on campus!

General instructions:

1. Room rates include sheets and towels. Bring your own **pillow, washcloths,** and **extra towels** if desired.
2. We must pay for every bed used, but children may sleep on the floor in their parents' room at no charge. No linen is provided. Bring a pad or sleeping bag. Single rooms have space for one child, doubles for two, triples for three. Register early to get your desired accommodations. A limited number of triple rooms are available.
3. Tickets for meals served in the university cafeteria Tuesday through Friday are usable any day. Order as many as needed for the week. Individual meal cost is: breakfast—$3.60, lunch—$4.75, and dinner—$5.90; children under 12 are one-half adult price.
4. Special banquet-ticket prices are offered for children under 12. Children under 5 are free, but we need to count them for table seating. There are no reduced prices for children for the Missionary Board banquet.
5. In addition to the children's program listed on the registration form, infants through preschoolers will be cared for in the Kem Hall preschool rooms. Mrs. Tami Ickes and staff will care for them at the following times: Monday 6:15 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.; Tuesday through Friday mornings 8:15 to noon; Tuesday evening 6:45 to 8:45; Wednesday afternoon 1:15 to 4:30; Wednesday evening 6:45 to 8:45; Thursday evening 4:45 to 8:45 (during the Missionary Board banquet and program; please feed your children before they arrive).

Mrs. Alyson (Finks) Plugfelder will also have activities for children 4 years old through 6th grade on Thursday **during** the Missionary Board banquet and program (approximately 4:45 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.) Please feed your children before they go with Alyson on Thursday.

Other Information

Housing — Persons needing housing Sunday night will be housed in Andrews Hall. Housing for Monday through Thursday will be in Kem Hall. The housing desk will be open Sunday evening from 6:00 to 9:00; Monday from 10:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. and after the evening program; Tuesday through Thursday from 10:00 a.m. until noon, from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m., and after the evening programs; Friday morning from 7:30 to 9:00, and immediately after worship until 1:00 p.m. The housing desk will be located in the Convocation Center lobby.

Camping — Campsites are available at Ashland County Fairgrounds, 2042 Claremont Ave., Ashland. No advance reservation is required. Available are: water, electric hook-up, restrooms and showers. $10.00 per night; pay on arrival.

Credentials — General Conference delegate credentials should be submitted in person at the earliest possible time to assure orderly seating. Credentials will be received in the Convocation Center lobby at the following times: Monday 2:00–6:00 p.m. and one-half hour following the evening program; Tuesday through Friday, 8:00–8:30 a.m.; and Tuesday through Thursday, 6:30–7:00 p.m.

Non-Delegate Guests — Non-delegates are invited and welcome to attend Conference. Please complete a reservation form. Non-delegates are asked to check in at the credential table and pay a nominal fee of $10.00. Each guest is then entitled to a guest name badge and a Conference packet.

Pastors — Please feel free to copy this information and the registration form as needed as a way to encourage a large delegation from your church.

To all who plan to attend Conference — Thank you for your assistance and cooperation in registering by **July 21.** More information about the General Conference program will be included in the July/August issue of the ***Evangelist.*** See you in August!

See instructions on previous page.

Theme:
"Called to Declare"

1994 General Conference
Registration Form

Monday, August 8, through
Friday, August 12

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Please reserve only one room per form. YOUTH are to register through the National BYIC if staying in YOUTH DORM. If staying with adults, use this form. **NOTE:** Registration with prepayment by July 21 results in guaranteed reservation.

Housing:	Rates**	Prepaid by July 21	Upon arrival
Ashland University Dormitory	Single	$17.00	$21.00
Floor: Women's restroom ____ Men's ____	Double	24.50	29.00
Room type: Single ____ Double ____ Triple ____	Triple	35.00	39.00

**no charge for children not sleeping in a bed

Nights staying: S ___ M ___ T ___ W ___ Th ___

Key deposits: $10.00/key. At least one key per room needed.

Other preferences: _____

Housing costs calculation

No. nights x rate/night

_____ x _____ = $ _____

No. keys___ x $10.00 = _____

Total housing enclosed = $ _____

CAMPING: Ashland Fairgrounds

Water and electric hookups, restrooms, and showers. $10.00 per night. Pay on arrival.

Meal Tickets

Meals served in University cafeteria; tickets usable any day; order as many as you need for the week.

		No. tickets			
Breakfast	Adults	_____	x	$3.60	= $_____
	Children under 12	_____	x	$1.80	= _____
Lunch	Adults	_____	x	$4.75	= $_____
	Children under 12	_____	x	$2.40	= _____
Dinner	Adults	_____	x	$5.90	= $_____
	Children under 12	_____	x	$2.95	= _____

Banquet Reservations

Reservations for following events are a must due to early deadlines. Tickets ordered after July 21 subject to availability. No meal refunds after August 1.

Tues. 12:00 noon — World Relief Soup Luncheon		_____	(offering will be taken)	
Wed. 7:00 a.m. — Pastors' Wives Continental Breakfast/Fellowship		_____	x $3.00	= _____
Thurs. noon — Women's Luncheon	Adults	_____	x $6.25	= _____
	Children under 12	_____	x $3.75	= _____
	Children under 5	_____	x free	
Thurs. noon — Men's Picnic	Adults	_____	x $5.50	= _____
Thurs. eve. — Missionary Board Banquet		_____	x $9.25	= _____

Total Meals and Banquets Enclosed = $_____

Summary Totals

Total Housing Enclosed = $_____

Total Meals and Banquets Enclosed = $_____

Total Children's Program Enclosed = $_____

Total Enclosed = $_____

Make checks payable to

General Conference Housing

Send to:

General Conference Housing
524 College Avenue
Ashland, OH 44805

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Reg. #_____

Date rec._____

Amount rec._____

Check #_____

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM (ages 4 years through completed 6th grade):

Tuesday through Thursday, 8:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.; Fri., 8:15 a.m. to noon.
Lunch provided Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

Family Rates	Week	Day		Week	Day
1 child	$46.00	$15.00;	2 or more children	$70.00	$24.00

Child's Name	Age/Grade Completed	Days (circle)	
_____	___ ___	T W Th F	$_____
_____	___ ___	T W Th F	$_____
_____	___ ___	T W Th F	$_____

Total for Children's Program $_____

Mail this form as soon as possible with payment in full (but no later than July 21).

Send to: General Conference Housing, 524 College Ave., Ashland, OH 44805

Director and Seven Tentmakers Selected To "Take STAKE" in the Florida District

Orlando, Fla. — Rev. Kerry Scott has been selected to serve as director of STAKE (Saturation of the Target Area for Kingdom Extension), the new church-planting project in the Florida District.

In addition to Rev. Scott and his family, seven other individuals have been officially selected to be a part of STAKE and have committed themselves to this church-planting project.

Rev. Scott, his wife Denise, and their three children—Kyle (9), Kristin (6), and Kenton (3)—will move to the Orlando area in August to begin the work of church planting. Rev. Scott will support himself and his family in secular employment while providing pastoral leadership for the multi-church project.

For the past 12 years, Rev. Scott has served at the Jefferson Brethren Church, Goshen, Ind., first as associate pastor and since 1987 as senior pastor. A former Brethren Summer Crusader, he is a graduate of both Ashland University (1978) and Ashland Theological Seminary (M. Div., 1982).

The seven tentmakers who will work with the Scotts are Linda Yoder, Mark Ray, Dawn Kidd, Robert Geddes, Vanda Funkhouser, Enid Schrader, and Annalee Hoover. These people will likewise support themselves in secular employment. In addition to these seven, four other persons are seriously considering serving with STAKE as tentmakers.

According to Rev. David Stone, who has been heading up the STAKE project, "The large number of people who have been willing to consider moving to a new area and a new job in order to participate in a non-paid ministry in the difficult area of church planting speaks well of the spiritual strength of The Brethren Church."



Rev. Kerry and Denise Scott with children (l. to r.) Kenton, Kyle, and Kristin.

The Missions/Outreach Ministry of the Florida District is continuing to seek other Brethren who are open to becoming a part of this challenging, groundbreaking, evangelism and church-planting project in Florida. Anyone interested in becoming a part of STAKE—or in receiving the STAKE newsletter or regular electronic mail updates—should write to STAKE, 1310 Bloomingdale Ave. E., Valrico, FL 33594 (or call 813-681-2790 or send a request through electronic mail at flstake.aol.com).

— reported by Rev. David Stone

Brethren Pastor Reilly Smith Lauded in Mulvane Newspaper

Mulvane, Kans. — Rev. Reilly Smith, pastor of the Mulvane First Brethren Church and this year's General Conference moderator-elect, has received plenty of coverage recently in *The Mulvane News*, a local newspaper.

In addition to his pastoral responsibilities, Rev. Smith serves as a Mulvane police officer and in this position has served as the local D.A.R.E. (Drug Awareness Resistance Education) officer. An item in the March 3 edition of *The Mulvane News* reported that Rev. Smith had notified school officials that he would no longer be able to run the D.A.R.E. program for Mulvane because of his upcoming responsibilities (in 1994-95) as General Conference Moderator for The Brethren Church.

The news item said: "It's a difficult day for D.A.R.E. because Reilly has been the cornerstone of that program in the Mulvane schools since the program was introduced several years ago. He has been an outstanding coordinator for D.A.R.E. . . . It will be difficult to find someone who can make the D.A.R.E. program as successful as Reilly did."

Articles and pictures in later editions of *The Mulvane News* in March reported that Rev. Smith was given a letter of commendation from the board of education for his work with the D.A.R.E. program. He was also presented a D.A.R.E. ring by the Mulvane Grade School to show its appreciation for his work as a D.A.R.E. officer for the last five years. And he was awarded a framed certificate recognizing him as one of three people who "Made a Difference" in the Mulvane community during the month of March.

World Relief of NAE Seeking To Respond to Needs in Rwanda

Wheaton, Ill. — World Relief of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) is seeking ways to respond to the needs of people affected by the waves of violence in the African nation of Rwanda.

It is estimated that up to 500,000 people have been killed and that 1.3 million have fled their homes in Rwanda. Approximately 300,000 have fled to four neighboring countries.

World Relief of NAE is working with church leaders in Central Africa to develop a church-based response to help meet the needs of these people, both those in Rwanda and those who have fled to neighboring nations. Several mission groups with ties to the National Association of Evangelicals have had a strong presence in northern Rwanda, including Evangelical Friends Mission, CBInternational, and the Free Methodist Church.

In responding to the crisis in Rwanda, World Relief of NAE is stepping out in faith. Because of the number of disasters in the past year in other nations and in the U.S. to which it has responded, World Relief's disaster response fund is empty.

In a letter to Dick Winfield (who serves as World Relief coordinator for The Brethren Church) and to persons in similar positions in other NAE denominations, Arthur Gay, Executive Director of World Relief of NAE, wrote: "I need you to join us in praying for and giving to the relief efforts to help families whose lives have been torn apart by war, so that we would be able to mount a church response that is glorifying to our Lord."

He continued: "I appreciate your support of our efforts—through prayer, giving and cooperation—to ensure we make the most of the resources we have to provide a strong, reliable church response that will do the most to save and change lives."

World Relief of NAE receives funds for its relief and development work from the member denominations (including The Brethren Church) of the National Association of Evangelicals. April is World Relief emphasis month in The Brethren Church, but gifts may be given for this work at any time.

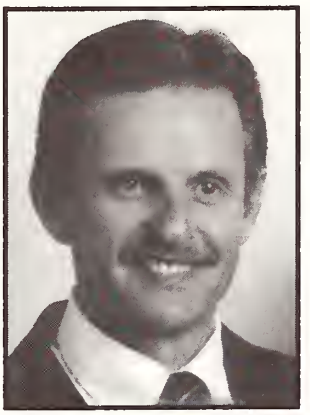
Dave Hoyt Set Apart as a Brethren Elder May 15 at Park Street Brethren Church

Ashland, Ohio — Dave E. Hoyt was set apart as an elder in The Brethren Church during the 8:30 a.m. worship service on Sunday, May 15, at the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church.

The setting apart service followed action by the National Ordination Council recognizing Rev. Hoyt's 1977 ordination in the Open Door Christian Churches in California.

A 1986 graduate of Ashland Theological Seminary (with a Master of Divinity degree), Rev. Hoyt has served as Pastor of Youth Discipleship at Park Street Brethren Church since February 1991. Prior to this (from 1987 to 1990), he pastored the Walcrest Brethren Church in Mansfield, Ohio. While in seminary he was student pastor of a Presbyterian Church in Crestline, Ohio.

Born in Los Angeles, Calif., in 1945, Dave attended Ione High School in Ione, Calif., graduating in 1963. Following high school, he worked as an apprentice painter and decorator in Terra Linda, Calif., before entering Christian service with the Open Door Christian Churches in 1968. From 1971 to 1974 he served with Deo Gloria Trust, a Christian organization in England. (*See his article, "A Wide-Open Door to England and Scotland" in the May* EVANGELIST).



Rev. Dave E. Hoyt

In addition to his pastoral work, Rev. Hoyt has chaplaincy experience in nursing home, youth detention center, and hospital settings.

Dave is married to the former Virginia M. Palombo from the Bronx, N.Y. "Ginny" has served since 1983 as office manager for the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church. The Hoyts have two daughters, Marianne (14) and Susie (12).

Members of Garber Church Gain New Ideas for Outreach At Ministry Growth Workshop

Ashland, Ohio — Members of the Garber Brethren Church in Ashland looked at strengths and weaknesses of their congregation and at areas of growth and potential on Sunday, May 15, during the church's first Ministry Growth Workshop.

About 30 people attended the day-long event and came away with a renewed spirit for reaching their community with the message of Christ.

Passing On the Promise co-coordinators Conrad Griffith and Joanne Kroft orchestrated the event, which included a soup-and-sandwich lunch and a time of sharing vital information about the church. Congregational advisor Paul Sluss led the participants through a variety of activities that produced more than 30 action-ideas for reaching out to new people and inviting them to church activities.

Garber Pastor Ralph Gibson called the day a great success, as "the people took hold of service opportunities and ownership for future ministry in the church."

— reported by Pastor Ralph Gibson

Southwest District Conference Helps "Put Feet to the Faith"

Tucson, Ariz. — From the starting donuts to the concluding fellowship, the Southwest District Conference, held April 15–17 at Northwest Brethren Chapel in Tucson, epitomized to this writer the idea of "putting feet to our faith."

The theme of the conference was "Proclaim His Name," taken from Acts 5:42. Speakers for the conference included Rev. Russell Gordon, this year's General Conference Moderator; Rev. David Cooksey, Director of Pastoral Ministries for The Brethren Church; and Mr. Rollie Cook, Southwest District moderator.

Sweet worship opened the conference on Friday evening. The business meeting on Saturday included decisions about adopting recommendations from the Southwest District Executive Board for streamlining the district by-laws. The recommendations changed committees into boards, reduced the number of boards to five, and reduced the number of members on each board.

Rev. Russ Gordon encouraged the district to play a leading role in church planting and church growth. Rev. Dave Cooksey urged the district not to be content with mediocrity, but to become risk-takers.

To these ends, the Great Western Brethren Roundup, a family affair, is being planned for June 1995 in Estes Park, Colorado. So Brethren, get out those walking shoes and come and join us Western Brethren!

Following the business meeting, several members of the district shared ways to "Proclaim His Name" daily. Small groups were formed to discuss pitfalls and obstacles each person faces in proclaiming His name in his or her daily walk.

The Southwest District Brethren youth also met during the Conference. With the assistance of Lynne Brady, Ellen Fisher, Dawn Kidd, and Stacey Oligee, the youth presented a skit that demonstrated ways of "putting feet to faith."

Fellowship continued with a carry-in meal to begin Saturday evening worship. A service of footwashing followed, and the worship concluded with the sharing of the Bread and the Cup. As those in attendance sang the closing special song, there was a feeling that we were indeed all linked together across the miles—one vision, one love, one God.

— Debbie Wilson, Southwest District Conference Secretary

To cultivate kindness is a valuable part of the business of life.

— Samuel Johnson

World Relief Helps Co-Sponsor Conference of Peace and Hope

Wheaton, Ill. — In an effort to help equip the small but vibrant church in Croatia with the skills it needs to reach its embattled neighbors in need, World Relief of the National Association of Evangelicals joined Croatia's Protestant Evangelical Council in sponsoring a Conference of Peace and Hope.

The conference was held May 24–28, in Bizovac, Croatia, with more than 200 Croatian leaders in attendance.

During the past two years, World Relief provided support to the Protestant Evangelical Council as its members delivered more than $500,000 in emergency supplies. But just meeting physical needs is not enough to help people survive the traumas of war. The church must also reach out and help survivors with their emotional and spiritual needs.

Many church leaders in Croatia have not obtained formal training and don't feel confident about addressing trauma and emotional needs. The goal of World Relief and the Protestant Evangelical Council was to help equip these leaders to be peacemakers and bearers of hope in their communities even in the midst of war.

From The Grape Vine

Thomas (T.J.) McLaughlin and **Edward Miller** were set aside as licensed pastors in The Brethren Church during the May 8th worship services at the Pleasant View Brethren Church of Vandergrift, Pa. T.J. and Ed are both attending Ashland Theological Seminary part time, and they are co-pastoring the Fremont, Ohio, Brethren Church on a part-time basis.

Mrs. Merna Edwards, a member of the Lanark, Ill., First Brethren Church, was honored as an outstanding citizen by the Carroll County Pomona Grange for her work in the local community. She belongs to the County Family Community Education Unit, helps at the County Thrift Shop, and is always willing to transport people to the doctor or to other appointments. At the Lanark Church, she sings in the choir, belongs to the W.M.S., delivers meals, brings elderly members to Sunday school, and is in charge of the Cradle Roll department. She was completely surprised by the award.

The **Senior and Junior Choirs** of the Lanark, Ill., First Brethren Church gave two presentations of the Easter Cantata *He Is Risen* on Palm Sunday. A cast of twelve portrayed scenes during the musical presentation, with Lanark Pastor Jim Garrett doing the part of Jesus. Marsha Green directed the cantata, and Bonnie Bauer and Karen Bushman played the piano. Both concerts were well-attended by people from the congregation and the community.

Dr. Juan Carlos Miranda, Director of Latin America Missions for the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church, was the guest speaker for Missionary Conference Sunday, April 24, at the Goshen, Ind., First Brethren Church. Faith Promises for the coming year were received during the service.

The **Nursery Department children** of the Berlin, Pa., Brethren Sunday School hosted a tea for their mothers on Mother's Day. The mothers were surprised when the children served them on individually designed plates, which the children had made during their craft time on the previous Sunday. Between 40 and 50 children and mothers enjoyed this special event. The children are planning a similar occasion for their dads on Father's Day and for their grandmothers and grandfathers on Grandparent's Day.



James and Diane Jones (center of photo) were ordained as deacon and deaconess on Sunday, May 1, at the West Alexandria, Ohio, First Brethren Church. Rev. Dale Long (far r.) conducted the ordination, held after the morning worship service, assisted by Rev. David Oligee, pastor of the West Alexandria Church (at l. in photo). A carry-in dinner was held following the service in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Jones.

Report & Photo by Luella Pointer



The Neoma W.M.S. Circle of the Lanark, Ill., First Brethren Church made two comforters recently, which they sent to Riverside Christian School in Kentucky.

Report by Sue Michael, photo by Merna Edwards

In Memory

Donald H. Flagg, 71, May 15. Longtime member of the Peru First Brethren Church, where he had served as moderator, trustee, deacon, teacher, historian, and janitor. Services by Rev. Richard Austin and Pastor James Naff.

Ruth Stoddard, 77, May 11. Member for 66 years and deaconess at the Hagerstown First Brethren Church, where she was president for many years of the W.M.S., taught in the church nursery for 55 years, and served as missions secretary, official board member, and EVANGELIST subscription agent. She also was active in the Southeastern District, holding various district offices and serving on various boards. Services by Pastor Gerald Barr.

Robert W. Klepser, 78, May 3. Longtime member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, where he had served as an usher and as Sunday school treasurer. Services by Pastor Arden Gilmer and Rev. Tom Schiefer.

Merril Orebaugh, 80, April 13. Member for 25 years of the Oakville First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Dan Lawson.

Guy Pence, 43, January 9. Member of the Oakville First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Dan Lawson.

Weddings

Deborah Geisz to **Rick Shields**, May 5, at the Lanark First Brethren Church; Associate Pastor Robert Schubert officiating. Bride a member of the Lanark First Brethren Church.

Linnea A. Lindholm to **Richard W. Wright**, May 5, at the West Alexandria First Brethren Church; pastor David S. Oligee officiating. Bride a member of the West Alexandria First Brethren Church.

Loriel Reneé Bash to **Richard Klingensmith**, April 23, at the Pleasant View Brethren Church; Pastor R. Keith Hensley officiating. Members of the Pleasant View Brethren Church.

Beatrice Vietmeyer to **Herbert Martz**, April 2, at the Lanark First Brethren Church; Associate Pastor Robert Schubert officiating. Bride a member of the Lanark First Brethren Church.

Goldenaires

Helen and Jacob Mackall, 55th, June 28. Members of the Vinco Brethren Church.

Raymond and Mae Rodgers, 60th, June 26. Members of the Vinco Brethren Church.

Membership Growth

Valley: 2 by transfer

Goshen: 7 by baptism

Pleasant View: 1 by baptism

New Lebanon: 1 by baptism, 1 by transfer

West Alexandria: 18 by baptism, 13 by transfer

Little Crusader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

Hi boys and girls!

I'm sure you have heard many times from your parents or your teachers to always say "Thank you" to people who give you something or do something for you. Perhaps you even get tired of hearing them remind you. The Bible gives a lesson on being thankful. It is found in the Gospel of Luke.

One day while Jesus was traveling, He saw ten men who had the disease called leprosy. When people had leprosy, they got sores all over their bodies and they almost never got well. These men could not live with their families because the disease would spread to other family members. They were not even supposed to come close to Jesus. So they stood at a distance and shouted for Jesus to have pity on them. When Jesus saw them, He told them to get into town and see the priests. As they were on their way to see the priests, they were healed of the leprosy.

Of these ten men, only one turned around and ran back to thank Jesus for healing him. Jesus wondered where the other nine were. Were they not grateful that they had been healed? Had no one ever told them to remember to say "Thank you"?

Jesus wants us always to be grateful for the many things He has given us. Always remember to say "Thank you" to Jesus!

The Message Box

Cross out the words in the boxes with these numbers: 1 3 4 7 9 10 12 13 15 16 18 19 22 25 26 28 29. Find the message in the remaining boxes.

The message is: _____

_____. Psalm 136:1

Love 1	Give 2	down 3	not 4	thanks 5
to 6	in 7	the 8	over 9	who 10
Lord 11	back 12	under 13	for 14	turn 15
any 16	he 17	sit 18	me 19	is 20
good. 21	up 22	His 23	love 24	ever 25
yes 26	lasts 27	go 28	no 29	forever. 30



106th General Conference

August 8–12

Ashland, Ohio

Theme: "Called to Declare"

Theme Verse: 1 Peter 2:9

Called to declare what? "The praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light." And called to declare that "once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy." And called to declare that mercy and love and salvation to a world full of people who need to come to saving faith in Jesus Christ.

We have embarked on a three year process to strengthen our ability and our resolve to be witnesses to the world. This conference will provide another opportunity to become equipped for that purpose.



Thomas L. Youngblood

The 1993 Conference will feature:

- Thomas L. Youngblood as guest speaker and leader of a day-long seminar entitled "Love Your Neighbor to Life."
- Rich times of worship and fellowship
- Addresses by Moderator Russell Gordon and Moderator-Elect Reilly Smith
- A concert of prayer led by the Seminary
- A celebration of Brethren missions
- A variety of luncheons and banquets
- Updates on denominational ministries
- Exciting business sessions

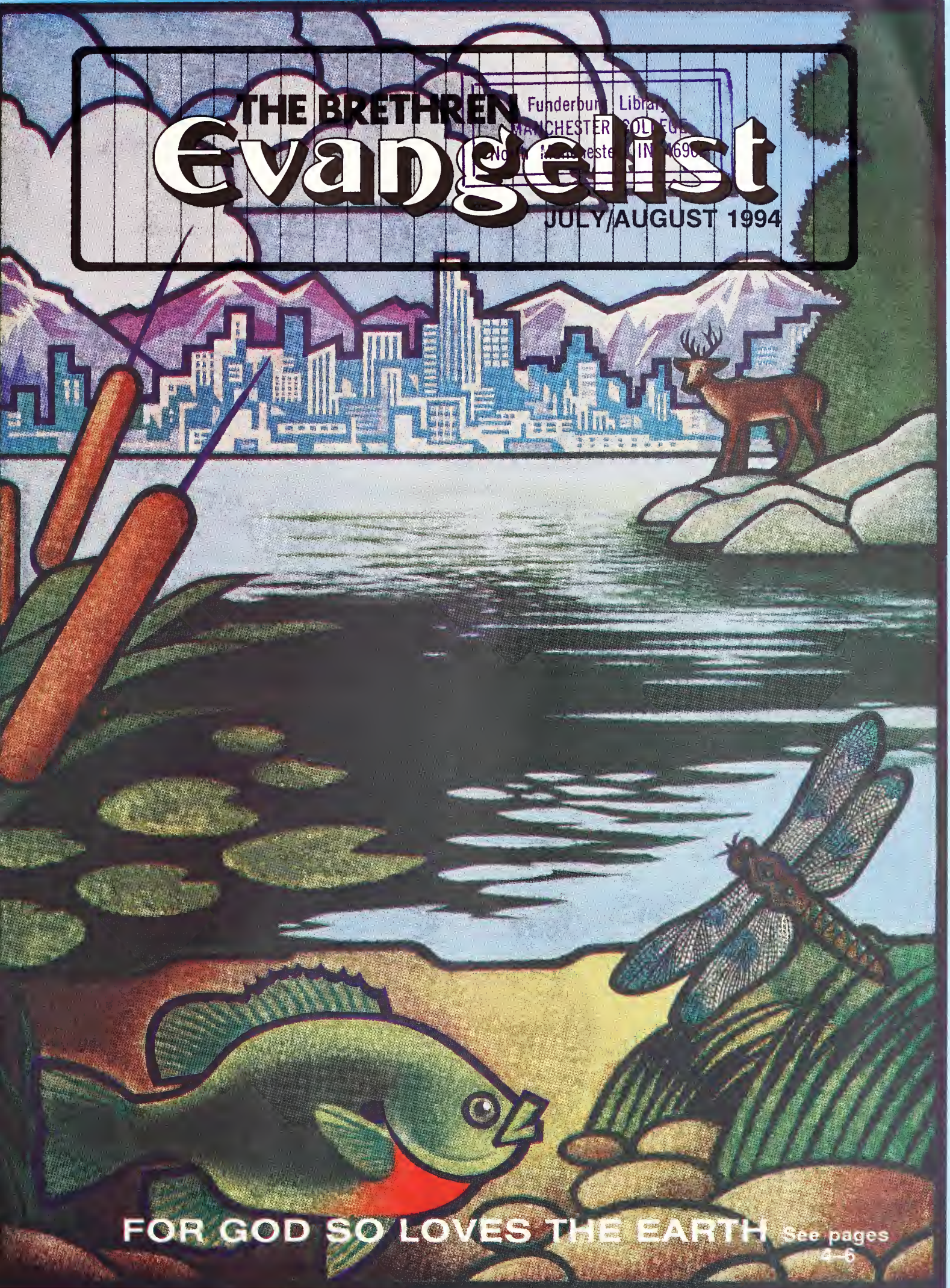
Don't miss this year's General Conference! Make plans now to attend, and complete the registration form on page 15 no later than ***July 21****.*

See you in August!

E.
BRETHREN HISTORICAL LIBRARY
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N MANCHESTER, IN 46962

THE BRETHREN
Evangelist
JULY/AUGUST 1994

Funderburg Library
MANCHESTER COLLEGE
North Manchester, IN 46962



FOR GOD SO LOVES THE EARTH See pages 4–6

Seeing God's Hand at Work

A Miracle That is Still in Progress

By Pam Clevenger

OUR LIVES WERE RADICALLY CHANGED on November 11, 1993, when, in the blink of an eye, a pickup truck crossed the center line and hit my little Honda Civic head on. God did not make the accident happen, but He was there to protect us and has brought a lot of good from a bad situation.

Our daughter Dorie (who had just turned two in October), son Zach (not yet born), and I were spared from death. A few days later, as I lay in my hospital bed, God told me He would be glorified by this situation, and that gave me peace. As time passed, my pregnancy (threatened by the accident) continued, my two broken legs began to heal, and Dorie totally recovered from her broken leg.

The church testifies

The people from our church were there supporting us from the start, when Pastor Dan Lawson climbed into the wreckage to pray for us. Nearly everyone in the Oakville body has helped us with meals, housekeeping, laundry, babysitting, cards (we especially enjoyed the homemade ones from the children's Sunday school classes!), calls, visits, a free haircut, loans of slippers, gowns and a robe, taxi service, loan of a wheelchair van, and most of all the **prayers**! Thanks also to Pastor Dan, Charlie Sites, and Jim Cooper for building a porch and ramp so that I could get out a little.

Our church has been a tremendous testimony to an untold number of people.

A new life

On January 2, 1994, I finally went into labor. It went well until 11:00 p.m., when my uterus and bladder ruptured. The baby's heart rate dropped into the 40s at that time. Thanks to the quick intervention of the doctors for baby Zach, he and I are both alive. When Zach was born, he was not breathing and his heart was not beating. He was resuscitated and put on a ventilator. The next day he was off the ventilator and seemed better—such a beautiful baby!

But then things changed. The doctors told us that Zach had severe neurological damage from lack of oxygen. A neonatologist from Riley Hospital in Indianapolis told us Zach would most likely have no quality of life and that we might want to let him go. The pain and grief that Robin and I (and all the people who love us) went through was indescribable.

We prayed the prayer of resignation, which means, "You know what we want Lord, but may your perfect will be done." We sent Zach to Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis and went home to grieve.

That weekend, God began to miraculously restore our infant son! We have experienced a miracle that is still in progress! We attribute this miracle to God's boundless love, power, and grace, and to the many prayers lifted up for us. All of you who prayed for us contributed to our miracle. Thank you! With God, anything is possible, limited only by our faith.

God's word gives guidance

God gave Lynne Lawson (wife of Pastor Lawson) a scripture passage for me when things were so dark. It is Isaiah 43. Read it and know that God is with us as His church here at Oakville as we seek His will and go forward to reach the lost. Time is short, and we need to be about the Father's work. God bless you all! [⇧]

Mrs. Clevenger and her husband, Robin, are members of the Oakville, Ind., First Brethren Church. In a follow-up phone call with Mrs. Clevenger, she reported that Zach is continuing to do remarkably well, considering the earlier prognosis. He is experiencing some developmental problems in his motor skills, and the doctor has indicated the possibility that he will have permanent mild cerebral palsy. Even so, his mother expressed her conviction that God's hand was in these events and that He has a purpose for her son's life, including any permanent disability he may have.

As for herself, Mrs. Clevenger can now walk without a walker, although she is still unable to walk normally and may never be able to do so. Dorie continues to do well. X-rays will be taken this month (July) to see if the break did any permanent damage to the growth plate in her leg.

Mrs. Clevenger has a very positive attitude toward the accident. She believes it can be used by God as a witness to others, and she is in fact doing just that, even sharing her testimony on a Christian radio program. She told the editor, "If it [the accident] leads one person to Christ, it's worth everything that happened." She also talks with enthusiasm and gratitude about the "incredible amount of prayer" that was offered for her and her family by other Christians, particularly by the Oakville Brethren.

The driver of the pickup truck received only minor injuries but was extremely distraught by the injuries he caused to the Clevenger family. The collision occurred when he reached for something in the vehicle and inadvertently went left of center. Mrs. Clevenger expressed no animosity toward him, acknowledging that we all make mistakes when driving.

If you have seen the hand of God at work in your life in a special way, you are encouraged to share your experience with other Brethren through the pages of the EVANGELIST. Write out your experience as simply and clearly as possible, but don't worry about producing a polished manuscript. A maximum of 500 words is suggested. Typewritten articles are preferred, but handwritten manuscripts will be accepted. Send your completed article to Richard Winfield, editor; THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST; 524 College Ave.; Ashland, OH 44805.

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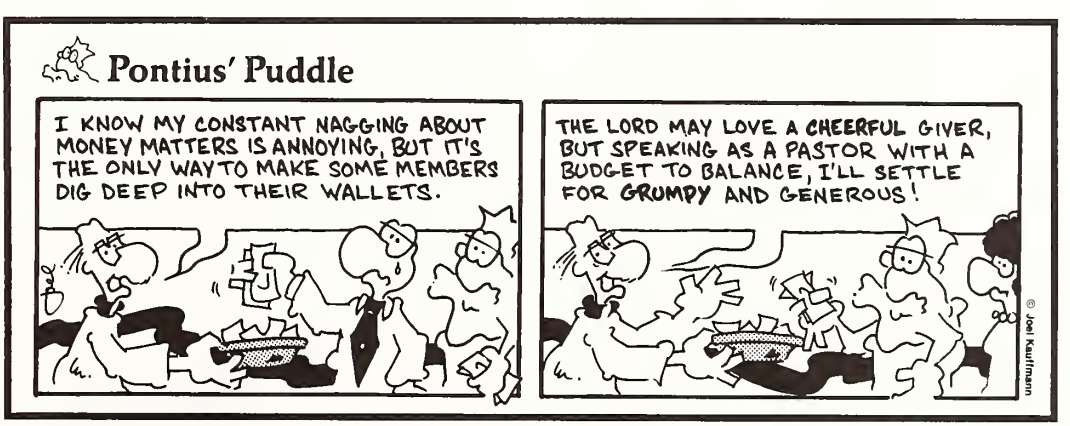
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The July–August *Woman's Outlook Newsletter* is in the center of this issue.

This is the combined July/August issue of the EVANGELIST, and there will be no issue next month.

Answer to the Little Crusader page:

"Jesus gives us **new bodies** in heaven."



For God So Loves the Earth

By Jeff Weidenhamer

A Creation Defiled

THE SHANTYTOWNS (colonias) of Reynosa, Mexico, haunt my memory. Our family visited Reynosa after Christmas in 1988 with a group from a church we were attending at that time in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Reynosa lies across the border from McAllen, Texas.

It's easy to become numb and indifferent when faced with statistics about Third World poverty and environmental degradation. But walking down the streets of that colonia in Reynosa, there were no cold, impersonal statistics. The smiling, inquisitive faces of the children for whom we had brought Christmas gifts were in sharp contrast with their environment.

The neighborhood in which they lived was built on an old landfill. The streets were unpaved; there was no electricity and no running water. "Drinking" water was obtained, untreated, from a river that ran an off-shade color of green, which drained the landfill site as well as receiving wastes from numerous local industries.

The neighborhood we visited is typical of others along the U.S.–Mexico border and of life in many other regions of the world. Poverty, population increase, and environmental degradation create an interrelated web of problems facing humanity as we enter the 21st century.

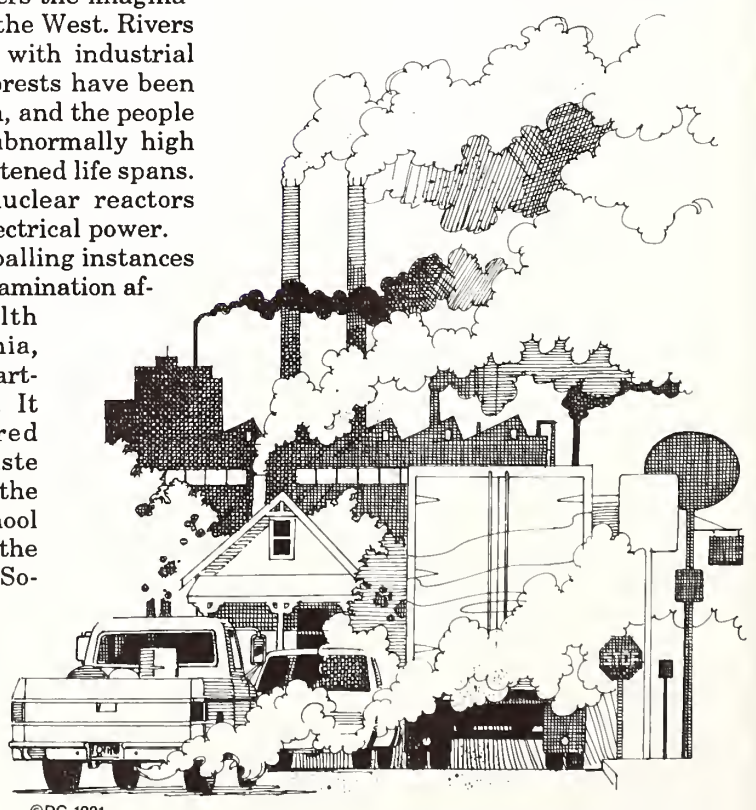
Dr. Weidenhamer attends the University Church in Ashland and is on the science faculty of Ashland University, where he teaches chemistry and environmental science. He is coordinator of the University's Environmental Lecture Series, which this spring had as its theme Christian perspectives on environmental stewardship.

- A recent article in *Smithsonian* magazine (May 1994, "Hot on the trail of toxic dumpers and other eco-outlaws, Texas-style," by R. Wolkomir) details the many environmental problems in the Juarez–El Paso area. Juarez has no sewage treatment system; all of that city's sewage as well as its industrial waste containing heavy metals, solvents, and other pollutants flows through what is known as the "Black Ditch" into the Rio Grande River. In the summer, flow from the Black Ditch is used to irrigate agricultural lands.
- Recent news reports have documented the largest known cluster of cases of anencephaly, in which children are born without a brain, on both sides of the Rio Grande River near Galveston, Texas.
- In the aftermath of the collapse of communism in eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, environmental devastation has been revealed on a scale that staggers the imagination of those of us in the West. Rivers are heavily polluted with industrial waste and sewage, forests have been killed by air pollution, and the people of the region have abnormally high cancer rates and shortened life spans. Numerous unsafe nuclear reactors are used to supply electrical power.

  One of the most appalling instances of environmental contamination affecting human health took place in Estonia, where 300 kindergartners lost their hair. It was later discovered that radioactive waste had been dumped on the land where their school was built ("Restoring the East European and Soviet Environments," by Hillary F. French, in *State of the World 1991*, New York: W.W. Norton and Co., p. 98).
- In Bangladesh, people perish in more frequent, more severe flooding, the result of deforestation in the Himalayan highlands.
- In the humid tropics, deforestation may cause the loss of more than a million species of plants and animals by the end of this century.

Clearly, creation is groaning as it awaits the revelation of the children of God (Rom. 8:19–22). But where should healing the earth fit on the church's agenda? Will caring for the environment detract from the church's primary mission of evangelism and discipleship? It is my conviction that it will not, and that caring for the earth will be an essential part of the church's task in the next century.

An ethic of Christian earthkeeping is rooted in many of the major doctrines of our faith, specifically:



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Creation

Throughout the Old and New Testaments, and not just in Genesis, the Scriptures emphatically declare that God is the Creator. The Psalmist wrote, "The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it . . ." (24:1).* Jeremiah wrote, "He who is the Portion of Jacob is not like these [idols], for he is the Maker of all things . . ." (10:16). In a well-known passage, Isaiah encouraged and comforted God's people, saying, "Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary . . ." (40:28). Paul wrote to the Colossians, "For by him [Christ] all things were created: . . . all things were created by him and for him" (1:16). And in the Revelation, John shares the elders' praise of God the Creator: "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being" (4:11).

God's creation of all things gives all things value. And if the earth is the Lord's, we simply may not do whatever we please with it. If we take a closer look at the Genesis story, we find some significant truths that are often overlooked. In Genesis 1, before the blessing to "Be fruitful and increase" was given to Adam and Eve (v. 28), the same blessing was given by God to the birds and sea creatures (v. 22). Dr. Calvin DeWitt, in the foreword to Dr. Susan Power Bratton's recent book *Six Billion & More* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press), which discusses Christian population ethics, writes:

> We have come to a time when the impact of humankind—our exploding number multiplied by the power each wields and the defilement each brings—not only denies the creatures fruitfulness and fulfillment but also extinguishes increasing numbers of them from the face of earth. We add field to field, expending forest, prairie, wetland, and savannah in the process.

DeWitt asks, "Does our God-given blessing of stewardship of creation grant us license to deny creatures God's blessing of fruitfulness and fulfillment?"

A more familiar passage in the creation story is Genesis 2:15, which says, "The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." The Hebrew words *abad* and *shamar*, translated "work" and "take care of," imply service and preservation. ("Take Good Care, It's God's Earth" by Calvin DeWitt in *Prism* magazine, Jan. 1994, p. 10 .)

The Fall

With the Fall of humankind, not only was the relationship between God and humanity broken, but the relationship between humanity and creation was broken as well. "Cursed is the ground because of you," God told Adam (Gen. 3:17). The prophets linked the condition of the land to the spiritual condition of the people. Consider, for example, this passage from Isaiah 24:4–6.

> The earth dries up and withers,
> the world languishes and withers . . . .
> The earth is defiled by its people;
> they have disobeyed the laws,
> violated the statutes
> and broken the everlasting covenant.
> Therefore a curse consumes the earth;
> its people must bear their guilt.

Redemption

The first verse that I recall memorizing in Sunday school at Park Street Brethren Church is John 3:16. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son . . . ." In my understanding, the world was always humanity. But in the original Greek, the word used for *world* in this verse is *kosmos*, which signifies all creation, rather than *anthropos*, signifying the world of humankind. Certainly the focus of the passage is on human redemption, but the verse may be rendered literally, "For God so loved *all of creation* that he gave his one and only Son . . . ."

In Paul's theology of redemption, "God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him [Christ], and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven" (Col. 1:19–20). The fact that humanity's relationship with creation was broken by the Fall implies that in redemption, this relationship will be restored.

Christ's return

For many Christians, the degradation of creation so visible in our time is another sign, even a welcome sign, of the imminent return of Christ. To these Christians, caring for creation is at best pointless and at worst only serves to prolong the time until Christ's appearing.

Such theology stands New Testament ethics on its head. As numerous passages throughout the New Testament bear witness, Christians were not expected to sit idly by while the world deteriorated. Christ called His disciples to be the "salt of the earth" and the

*Quotations from the Bible are from the *New International Version.*

"light of the world" (Matt. 5:13–14). He expects to find His disciples engaged in acts of love and mercy, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the prisoners, their lamps burning brightly when He returns (Matt. 25).

Paul urged the Romans "not [to] conform any longer to the pattern of this world" (12:2). The abuse of creation is a part of the pattern of a fallen world. It is not something Christians should be party to. In Noah's time, when God's judgment came upon an earth that was "filled with violence" (Gen. 6:13), Noah was charged with preserving not only himself and his family, but the diversity of creation as well.

In the judgment described in John's Revelation, it is written that "The time has come . . . for destroying those who destroy the earth" (11:18). It is inconceivable that the church should be a willing participant in the earth's destruction.

Putting ethics and beliefs into practice

Keeping the earth in a manner consistent with our calling as children of the Creator will require effort. It may not be comfortable. Yet it is not something we can ignore. One of my favorite cartoons about world hunger shows a crowd of people all thinking to themselves, "What can one person do?" Individually, we may not be able to do much, but together we can accomplish a great deal, just as the many individual raindrops of a rainstorm collectively bring water to the earth, its creatures, and to us.

I hope to visit the colonias of Reynosa again. I will probably not see a young Mexican boy named David, who made fast friends with my own son David on our first trip there. I will always wonder whether he grew sick from drinking the untreated water or if he developed cancer because some industries dumped toxic wastes without regard to human health. But there are other children in Reynosa and throughout the world who are waiting for their chance at life.

The Amish have a proverb that says, "We did not inherit the land from our parents; rather, we borrow it from our children." It is time for the church to do its part in healing the creation, so that creation and its creatures may flourish, and that our children may live. [⇧]

Doing Our Part for the Environment

By Michael Bailey, with Keith and Marjorie Bennett

THE FIRST CHAPTER of Genesis discusses the creation of humankind and our relationship to the Creator. God tells Adam that he is to rule over the earth and all the animals and plants. Psalm 24:1 tells us that the earth and all things on it are God's.

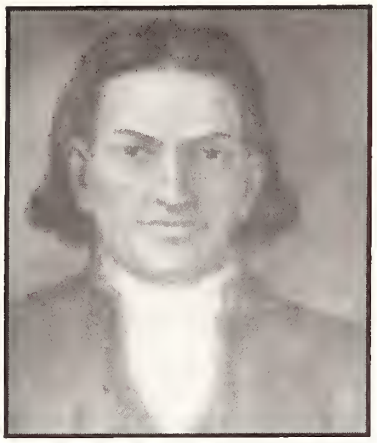
What, then, should be our attitude concerning the environment? Both verses tell us that God is the Creator and that all things belong to Him. But humankind has been charged by God to rule the earth. Does that mean all things are to be used as we see fit, no matter how wasteful, and without regard for the future? It may seem that way if we do not realize that all things on earth are a gift from God. Just as we wish to do God's will with the tithes and offerings we collect each Sunday, we also must wish to do what is best with His gift of this planet. For as Genesis 2:15 (*NIV*) states, "The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." This means trying not to be wasteful, recycling, advocating proper management of the earth's resources, and giving effort to try to accomplish these goals. When we properly care for our earth, we are simply taking care of our own home. God the creator gave us that task.

As members of a church we can:

1. Learn what items can be recycled in our area.
2. Recycle all possible items in our home and church, and place appropriate bins at church for collection of in-church materials.
3. Lobby local government to begin a recycling program or to expand an existing one.
4. Give all usable, unwanted items to local agencies that can use them; i.e., clothing, toys, household goods.
5. Adjust the thermostat up or down, depending upon the season, to decrease energy use.
6. Car pool on the way to church or church meetings.
7. Bring dishes to carry-in meals instead of using paper or styrofoam.
8. Purchase dishes and silverware for use by the church for special occasions and perhaps for carry-in meals.
9. Purchase items that use the least amount of packaging and of material that is recyclable. Notify local merchants of your concerns.
10. Participate with local programs on clean-up days and perhaps become involved with an "Adopt-a-Highway" program or be responsible for other public spaces
11. Help keep your earth home clean by not littering.
12. Maintain and beautify your church building and grounds.
13. Think of even more recycling suggestions for your church. [⇧]



Mr. Bailey is moderator of the Muncie, Ind., First Brethren Church; Rev. Bennett is pastor of the Muncie congregation; and Mrs. Bennett is a member of the church and the pastor's wife.



Early Brethren organizer. Do you know his name? See question 1.

A Brethren Quiz

By Matthew W. Hamel

How much do you know about the history of The Brethren Church? Who were the early Brethren? What can we learn from them? Come along on a quick tour of the early years of the Brethren. Begin at number 1, but be careful; there are sure to be some surprises along the way.

1. The organizer and guiding light of the early Brethren was:
Peter Becker. Go to 5.
Alexander Mack, Sr. Go to 10.

2. Right! Anabaptist was a negative term used of the Brethren by people in the established churches, who practiced infant baptism. The Anabaptists were so-called because they required those who had received infant baptism to be rebaptized as adult believers. Jump to 6.

3. Correct. The Radical Pietists saw marriage as an earthly institution that obstructed their quest for a spiritual union with God. The Brethren disagreed, and the controversy eventually led them to America. Detour to 9, and then go on to 7.

4. You're rushing things! This is the date of the arrival of the first Brethren in America. See 13.

5. Sorry. Peter Becker was the early Brethren leader who led the first group of Brethren to America in 1719. See 10.

6. The other movement that influenced the Brethren was Radical Pietism. A key belief of this group was:
Individual inspiration is more important than the Bible. Go to 9.
Marriage is sinful. Go to 3.

7. The Brethren movement in Germany began in what year?
1719. Go to 4.
1708. Go to 13.

8. Anabaptism was one of two movements that influenced the Brethren. Anabaptism means:
Rebaptism. Go to 2.
Against baptism. Go to 11.

9. True. Mack, on the other hand, believed that Brethren should always measure any new teaching by the standard of God's written revelation, the Bible. Go to 3 and then on to 7.

10. Correct. The son of a miller, Alexander Mack was born in Schriesheim (rhymes with "shoe-shine"), Germany, in 1679. Go on to 8.

11. Oops! See 2.

12. Guess again. Ephrata was the site of a Brethren splinter group, led by Conrad Beissel, whose distorted teaching included celibacy, monasticism, and elements of Radical Pietism. He was the author of many hymns, and he pioneered a unique style of singing that attracted large numbers of visitors to the Ephrata Cloister, located in Lancaster County, Pa. Go back to 20.

13. Bingo! The first official act of the Brethren movement took place in 1708 in the Eder River in Schwarzenau, Germany, with the baptism of eight people by trine immersion. Move on to 20.

14. The Brethren borrowed their style of plain dress from which group?
The Quakers. Go to 21.
The Mennonites. Go to 16.

15. Peter Nead, an early Brethren minister, was called the "English Preacher." Why?
Because he was from England. Go to 25.
Because he preached in both English and German. Go to 18.

16. Sorry! The primary influence of the Mennonites on the Brethren was on their identity, not on their style of dress. Today we are still quite similar to the Mennonites, except in our mode of baptism (Brethren immerse, Mennonites pour). Bypass to 21.

17. Good job! The Germantown meetinghouse was built in 1770. Prior to that the Brethren met in homes. The Germantown building is one of the outstanding remaining examples of early meetinghouse design. It is now surrounded by the Philadelphia metropolitan area. Go to 14.

18. Good going! Nead was the first well-known Brethren leader able to speak both German and English fluently. He was also author of *Theological Writings*, an exposition of distinctly Brethren practices. Proceed to 28.

19. Brethren were persecuted in the colonies for their stand against:
Slavery. Go to 30.
Taxes. Go to 22.

20. The first meetinghouse of the Brethren in America was located at:
Ephrata, Pennsylvania. Go to 12.

Mr. Hamel, a member of the Johnstown, Pa., Second Brethren Church, is a 1993 graduate of Ashland Theological Seminary with a degree in church history. He has spent the past year researching Brethren history, which has included doing several genealogical searches. If interested in his services, you may contact him in care of the EVANGELIST.



This was the first Brethren meetinghouse (church building) constructed in America. Do you know where it is located? See question 20.

Germantown, Pennsylvania. Go to 17.

21. Correct. They also were influenced by the Quaker meetinghouses and by the Quaker form of organization. Progress to 19.

22. Sorry! The Brethren were generally grateful for the protection offered by the British government, and so were willing to pay their taxes. This attitude did cause trouble during the Revolutionary War period. March onward to 15.

23. Look it up! It is based on the New Testament practice referred to in Romans 16:16, 1 Peter 5:14, and in other passages. The Brethren view of Scripture led them to uphold many practices from New Testament times. Ease on over to 31.

24. Right. During the early years of the Brethren in the U.S., church members were scattered and travel was difficult. The semiannual Love Feasts (Communion services) were great social events, and Brethren would come from afar. They would arrive on Saturday for fellowship, then stay over night in the church "loft" to be present for the services on Sunday. Forward to 27.

25. False. See 18

26. Incompatibility with the world may be the result of a faithful Christian life, but unfortunately this is not the correct answer. Go back to 31 and try again.

27. The printing press was crucial to maintaining Brethren unity. What was the name of the family that printed well-known Bibles in German during colonial times?

Sauer. Go to 33.

Holsinger. Go to 36.

28. One of the distinctive Brethren practices was the salutation with a Holy Kiss. This is based on:

European tradition. Go to 23.

The Brethren view of Scripture. Go to 35.

29. Brethren meetinghouses often had an attic (loft) above the main assembly area. This space was for:

Sunday school. Go to 32.

Overnight guests. Go to 24.

30. Right, particularly in the South. This affected Brethren settlement in Virginia, where even today the vast majority of Brethren live close to the Shenandoah valley, away from the Tidewater region. Go on to 15.

31. The Brethren concept of being distinct from the rest of society is called:

Incompatibility. Go to 26.

Nonconformity. Go to 34.

32. Too bad! Sunday school was not considered necessary by the early Brethren. They preferred to keep biblical instruction in the home. See 24.

33. Good job! Three generations of Sauers printed much literature for the German settlers in the Philadelphia area. The eldest Sauer was a rival of Benjamin Franklin in the printing trade. Several German Bibles from the Sauer presses are on display in the Ashland Theological Seminary library. Go to 37.

34. Correct. This is based on Romans 12:2—"Conform no longer to the pattern of this present world, but be transformed by the renewal of your minds." Go to 29.

35. Yessiree! See 23.

36. You're rushing things! Although Henry Holsinger was active in many printing interests, his family did not print German Bibles during the late 1700s. Return to 27.

37. Congratulations! You've completed this tour of early Brethren history! Soon we will take a tour of the years leading up to the organization of our branch of the Brethren (The Brethren Church).

For further reading

Articles in *The Brethren Encyclopedia*, Donald F. Durnbaugh, ed. (Philadelphia Pa., and Oak Brook, Ill.: The Brethren Encyclopedia, Inc., 1983).

Meet the Brethren, Donald F. Durnbaugh, ed. (Elgin, Ill.: The Brethren Press, 1984)

Counting the Cost: The Life of Alexander Mack by William G. Willoughby (Elgin, Ill.: Brethren Press, 1979).

The Old Brethren by James Lehman (Elgin, Ill.: Brethren Press, 1977).

The Anabaptist Story by William R. Estep (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1963).

Understanding Pietism by Dale Brown (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978).



Understanding the Bible

Theonomy and Biblical Interpretation

By Kenneth Sullivan

I LIVE in Milledgeville, Illinois, just 20 miles from the Mississippi River. It is one of the few places in Illinois with rolling hills and even ski resorts.

One hundred miles east of Milledgeville lies the metropolitan area of Chicago, stretching some 36 miles along the southwestern coast of lake Michigan. From Milledgeville you may choose one of three major routes to reach the city. Your choice determines which part of the Chicago area you reach and how quickly you get there.

Different starting points

Our approach to Scripture has similar results. Our starting point determines where we end up. The Brethren historically have approached Scripture from a Christ-centered perspective. That perspective has determined our interpretations and our distinctive practices.

While this might seem like a reasonable starting point, it is not accepted by all Christians. Many Christians, some Brethren included, approach the Bible from different starting points. This accounts for the many different interpretations and the various areas of disagreement. Just as our faith in Christ's finished work at the Cross of Calvary determines our eternal destiny, so our approach to the Bible determines our destination in terms of doctrine and practice.

Christians disagree because they approach Scripture by different roads. Some of these highways—Dispensationalism, Covenant Theology, Reformed Theology, Theonomy (also known as Reconstruction or Dominion Theology)—agree with our own Christological approach on essentials such as the substitutionary atoning work of Christ, His death and resurrection. It is in broader areas of doctrine and practice that we differ.

To understand the impact of the Brethren starting point, let us look at how Theonomy approaches Scripture. While both the Brethren approach and Theonomy place great emphasis on the authority of God's word and the lordship of Christ, the similarities end there.

Theonomy or Dominion Theology is a branch of Calvinism that has a unique twist in its approach to the Bible. It adheres to the usual Reformed emphasis upon God's sovereignty and elective purpose, but it takes a very different road in its approach to Old Testament law.

Humanity created to rule

The key verse for Theonomists is Genesis 1:26: "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them **rule** over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground" (*NIV*). The important word in this verse is *rule*, or as it is rendered in the King James version—*dominion*. Thus the idea of "Dominion Theology."

The concept of dominion has become a manifesto for an aggressive application of biblical standards to all of culture, politics, and religion. Theonomists believe that God created humanity to exercise dominion—delegated rule and ownership—over every aspect of creation. This dominion was lost when Adam sold his birthright to Satan for a lie. God disinherited Adam and his children following the Fall (Gen. 1:26–28; 3:23).

Dominion restored

But Theonomists believe that the privilege of dominion was restored when Jesus Christ reclaimed man's birthright. He did this by living as a man in perfect conformity to God's law, dying on the cross as man's substitute, and rising victoriously from the dead. He then gave this dominion to His people through a New Testament or Covenant, transferring His inheritance to the lawful heirs or faithful believers. Christians regain the *Dominion Mandate* through Christ (Matt. 28:18–20).

Because the Dominion Mandate (Gen. 1:26) is their starting point, Theonomists give equal authority to the Old and New Testaments. This is very different from the Brethren view of biblical revelation as progressive and culminating in Jesus Christ. Their view of the two Covenants as equal leads Theonomists to conclude that Old Testament case law—that is, the moral and legal aspects of biblical law—remains applicable to today's world. Biblical law is seen as a liberating force for people and society, for politics, economics, culture, science, education, and religion.

Theonomy seeks to reform society through the proclamation of the gospel and the imposition of biblical law. One of their theologians, Gary North, has written, "How can we disciple the earth if we are not running it?" (*Liberating Planet Earth*, Dominion Press, p. 25). Unbelievers and an apostate state must be replaced with Bible-believing Christians. He writes: "The way to regain the ground we have lost is

---

Rev. Sullivan is pastor of the Milledgeville, Ill., Brethren Church. He serves on The Brethren Church's Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication, which is preparing this series of articles.

"For Brethren, the starting point is Christ. Our entire understanding of Scripture, Old Testament included, is filtered through the life and teaching of Jesus Christ."

by becoming knowledgeable and involved in the ordering of earth's governments, including civil government" (*ibid.*, p. 25). Dominion is God's assignment to humanity; He wants Christians to control the earth on His behalf (Gen. 1:26; Matt. 28:18–20).

Interesting conclusions

This line of reasoning has led to some interesting conclusions. Old Testament case law would require that adultery be penalized as a capital offense; stoning would be an appropriate punishment for disobedient children; welfare recipients would learn the work ethic as indentured servants; and Christians would be justified in using force to oppose oppressive governments. Where one begins in approaching Scripture determines one's conclusions.

For Brethren, the starting point is Christ. Our entire understanding of Scripture, Old Testament included, is filtered through the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. God's eternal purpose begins with Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:9); His revelation culminates in Christ and finds complete fulfillment in Him (Heb. 1:1–2). The New Testament, God's final and complete revelation in Christ, takes precedence over the Old and interprets it. Christ's commands supersede the law.

"His [Christ's] teaching, not the law, becomes the cornerstone for the life and ministry of the church."

The resulting conclusions are very different. Instead of a legal system of morality imposed upon people, a new law written on the heart by the indwelling Christ becomes the dynamic of a redeemed community (Jer. 31:31–34; Heb. 10:12–18). Obedience flows from a heart captured by God's love and grace. Jesus Christ as Lord becomes our example for life and our interpretive model in approaching the Bible. His teaching, not the law, becomes the cornerstone for the life and ministry of the church.

The law, instead of transforming humankind, can only condemn us, exposing our sin and disobedience in the flesh, which has no power to obey (Rom. 3:20; 8:3–4). God's purpose in Old Testament law was to clearly demonstrate to human beings their need for a salvation beyond anything they could do for themselves. The law is a tutor that brings us to Christ (Gal. 3:24).

If the law is powerless to produce righteous people, it is also impotent to transform society into a Christian kingdom. Sin is as much a cultural and national problem as it is an individual one. The road we take in interpreting Scripture will lead us to specific biblical solutions to the sinfulness of society.

Beginning with Christ, we discover that God has established a New Covenant and abolished the Old in the process (Heb. 8:6–13; Rom. 10:4). It is not law that humanity needs, but the transforming power of the indwelling Christ (Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18). God's grace and forgiveness are offered as a replacement for condemnation and judgment.

A redeemed community

The church is called to be a redeemed community, in the world but not of it. When the church, as the church, invests its energies trying to transform culture and politics, it wastes precious God-given resources.

One example of this is the prolife movement. I am as much prolife as anyone. But a true Brethren response would be found in offering counsel, shelter, hope, and adoptive services to expectant mothers, rather than in staging protests in front of abortion clinics or in working through political processes to change the laws. The Brethren way would be to lovingly offer an alternative to the emptiness of today's solutions.

Early Christians living in Roman cities would go about the streets at night rescuing unwanted babies who had been placed outside the doors of homes to die. They went into prisons to minister to men and women who had no hope. They offered food and shelter to the homeless and destitute. At the same time, they preached the Gospel of Christ as the only hope for humanity and in the process converted the hearts of their contemporaries and changed society. They did it as a church, not as a political or legal movement.

"It is not law that humanity needs, but the transforming power of the indwelling Christ."

A false gospel

It is an appeal to a false gospel to attempt to redeem society before the heart of that society has been transformed by God's grace. The Brethren offered to the world a redeemed community of believers living out Christ's commands before a fallen world.

Brethren, we are a unique people precisely because our starting point for biblical interpretation is Christ. We all approach the Bible with preconceived ideas. It is only as we recognize the basis of these conceptions that we can proceed with compassion and grace to debate those things on which we differ. [⇧]

Correspondence Welcomed

The members of the General Conference Executive Council's Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication invite readers to suggest topics or Bible passages to discuss in future articles in this column. Send questions, comments, or suggestions to the committee in care of The Brethren Evangelist, 524 College Ave., Ashland, OH 44805.

The Woman's Outlook Newsletter

A publication of the Brethren Woman's Missionary Society

July–August 1994 Volume 7, Number 6

The President's Pen

Dear Ladies,

Prayer — something that we usually take for granted. Lately, I have learned more than ever to depend on prayer and to realize what a powerful thing it is.

My husband, Jim, had triple bypass surgery on April 14. At home he had been having chest pains and he reluctantly agreed to go to the hospital emergency room. After some tests, the doctor felt that Jim needed to go to Grant Medical Center in Columbus for a heart catheterization.

My daughter and I followed the ambulance in the car. It was dark and raining, and we were not familiar with Columbus. A nurse at the local hospital had given us a map to follow in case we lost the ambulance in traffic. Well, the ambulance drove a little faster than my daughter cared to drive. So we both did some praying — for safety for us and for the ambulance, as we drove through traffic and rain. We arrived at the hospital at the same time as the ambulance. A heart catheterization was done in a couple of days and surgery followed.

During that time we made many trips back and forth from Ashland to Columbus (1½ hour drive). I did a lot of praying in the car, in the hospital room, and after arriving home safe and sound. I prayed as my children all traveled to the hospital from Ashland, North Carolina, and New Lebanon, Ohio. I have always prayed daily, but I believe during those many days, I was constantly in prayer.

Jim is back at work now and doing great. His doctor said, in looking at his chest X-rays, you would never know he'd just had surgery. I know that the many prayers of friends all over the world helped with his healing.

I could not exist a day without prayer — some quiet prayers and some prayers as I am on the run to one place or another. How thankful we can be that we have the privilege of prayer.

(continued on page 4)

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WOMEN PRAY

Text: *This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us — whatever we ask — we know that we have what we asked of Him.*
I John 5:14–15

This book by Evelyn Christenson was a reading circle book several years ago, and you may have a copy on your bookshelf. I do. I occasionally flip through the pages for a nugget, because I use a yellow marker when I read, and the nuggets are easy to find.

The author describes her method of presenting prayer seminars and the changes which occur in the church and in an individual's life. The stipulation is "according to His will." Re-reading the book is like a breath of fresh air!

One section near the beginning is entitled "Not for Women Only," and describes the experience of teaching men and children how to pray (the women were already involved in prayer seminars). This is what we need — individuals who pray, then prayers spreading through families, into every facet of our church, and then through the denomination.

I thought about this book during the WMS executive board meeting in May. So many prayer needs were mentioned during the day, and I thought, "What a ministry we have!" That day our prayers began, like tossing a pebble into the lake. Each of you can be a widening circle in the "lake" of prayer, because these urgent needs still exist. We need only to give God the concerns; He will do the rest.

- Prasanth and Nirmala Kumar and Allen Baer — traveling mercies to General Conference.
- Juan Carlos and María Miranda — relocating to South Carolina.
- Ken and Carolyn Solomon and Dave and Diane Kerner, safety during political unrest.
- Dave Kerner, recent laser eye surgery.
- Charlie and Linda Beekley, for her continued healing and for growth of their congregation.
- STAKE — Florida district church planting in Orlando area; need tentmakers and jobs for them.
- Dick and Kitty Winfield — short-term service as teachers of English in China (June 25–August 23).
- Kurt Stout — his missions internship will be in India and Malaysia this fall.

More details for these requests are included in Missionary Miscellany.

What happens when men, women, youth, and children pray? Let's try it and find out.

Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. Ephesians 3:20



Missionary Miscellany

Prasanth and Nirmala Kumar, our Indian missionaries, will attend General Conference. Unfortunately, their son, Sudhir, will not accompany his parents, as we originally hoped. After a number of attempts, his visitor's visa was denied.

Allen Baer's three-month furlough will enable him to attend General Conference. Pray for his and the Kumars' safety and good health, as well as for the nationals in Argentina and India who will continue the ministry while the missionaries are here.

Ken and Carolyn Solomon enjoyed a six-week visit with their families this spring. It was a good time for them to be in the U.S., due to the political unrest in Colombia caused by the national elections.

Recently Dave Kerner had laser eye surgery. Continue your prayers for his complete recovery and for the safety of all the Kerner family.

Juan Carlos and María Miranda are relocating to South Carolina, where Juan will teach in the International School of World Missions in Columbia and María will continue her radio program.

Florida is just one of the districts where church planting is a top priority. Inter-district and intra-district efforts have established cooperative programs, giving finances and leadership to the new sites.

The Winfields will teach English as a second language, as well as reading and writing development for education and business leaders in China. Their past experiences as teachers in Nigeria and their present ministry with international students (Kitty teaches in the ACCESS program at Ashland University and Dick is an active supporter of the program) qualify them for this short-term teaching assignment. We will miss them at Conference.

Kurt Stout will be married in August to Heidi and they will spend the fall semester in India and Malaysia for part of Kurt's seminary education.

Prayers of thanks are given for Linda Beekley's improvement, for Rickey and Glenda Bolden's baby daughter, Leah Marie, and for Jim Black's healing from triple bypass surgery.

Missionaries for July are three families in Home Missions churches: Dave and Dawn West in Arizona; Daniel and Kathy Rosales in Florida; and

(continued on page 4)



READING CIRCLE BOOKS

Ladies, the WMS Executive Board selected the following books for your reading during 1994–95. From this list, we suggest each member read a minimum of two books for spiritual growth. The books will be available at the WMS sessions of General Conference.

Christian Living

When the Glass Slipper Doesn't Fit by Claire Cloninger and Karia Worley; $9.99

This book will make you laugh and cry, even coax a song from your lips. Ask God to teach you what Paul and Cinderella knew: that wherever you are, whatever you are doing, there is a reason to sing.

Christian Concerns

Prodigals and Those Who Love Them by Ruth Bell Graham; $9.99

For all of those who wander in the night and wait with the light on. A balm to hurting hearts.

Christian Novel

Not My Will by Francena H. Arnold; $7.99

Having sold more than 500,000 copies, *Not My Will* continues to inspire thousands, striking a responsive cord in every heart and sharing a message of hope and joy for those who are willing to surrender to the Lord.

Devotional

Making Sense of Life When Our Real Home Is Heaven by Steve Brown; $9.99

Using the book of Philippians as a launching pad, this warmly inviting study shows how to be a citizen worthy of heaven while an earthly resident.

Early Christians

Deborah by James R. Shott; $6.95

Needing a wise and capable judge, Israel turns to Deborah, to whom God has clearly granted wisdom. But Deborah is a woman in a nation which sees women as mothers, housewives, helpmates of their husbands, not judges and leaders.

Missions

New Song in the Andes by John Maust; $9.95

Missionary work went on among the Quichuas for decades with little, if any, fruit. Then God, by His Holy Spirit, broke through, and an incredible harvest began. (For many years, Mr. Maust wrote for *The Brethren Evangelist.*)

Slivers From the Cross by Brad Hill with Ruth Hill; $7.95

Here are trials and doubts, hopes and heartaches — the refreshingly honest chronicles of people who have taken up the cross of Christ.

In Memoriam

Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints. Psalm 116:15

A TRIBUTE TO HELEN SHIVELY

March 3, 1917 – April 26, 1994

One of the ladies whom we always saw at General Conference will look on us from her new heavenly home. Helen Shively moved from earth to heaven April 26.

Helen was synonymous with Conference. Last year she was honored for attending 76 Brethren General Conferences. Her mother, Mrs. U. J. (Nora) Shively, was the WMS president from 1919–24 and again from 1926–52. Helen attended and soon participated. She was well-trained in Sisterhood of Mary and Martha. In 1954 she was appointed Literature Secretary of the WMS, having served as the assistant secretary for seven years, and she continued in that position until 1987.

Helen was the reference librarian at Ashland University, a member of the WMS Faith Circle, the Truthseekers Sunday School Class, and the Park Street Brethren Church in Ashland. She had a host of friends and was a "member" of many families.

All of us are grateful to God for Helen's life, her friendship, her kindnesses, and the ways she expressed her love for the Lord.

A gift from the WMS will be given to the Seminary in Helen's memory.

THE WOMAN'S OUTLOOK NEWSLETTER

Published bimonthly in January, March, May, July, September, and November by the Woman's Missionary Society of The Brethren Church.

Mrs. Dorman Ronk, Editor
1325 Coachman Court
Ashland, Ohio 44805

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Send all subscriptions to Mrs. Robert Kroft, 608 Twp. Road 1151, RD 5, Ashland, OH 44805



HERE'S AN IDEA!

—Place the January–February *Newsletter* (the Directory issue) inside the back cover of the *Devotional Guide.* This keeps your WMS information together and is easy to find.

—The Lanark Friendship Circle sponsored a special ministry Friday, April 29, for all high school students at a special assembly in the Eastland High School in Lanark. Lisa Schmidecamp, the daughter of one of the Lanark members, is an emergency room nurse in a Chicago hospital. She also participates on a volunteer basis in a program called ENCARE — Emergency Nurses Cancel Alcohol Related Emergencies. Lisa presented a 45-minute program for the students.

The Emergency Nurses CARE Program centered around a slide presentation that showed accident victims being treated in an ER Trauma Center. It graphically depicted the dangers associated with drinking and driving. Many of the scenes were not pretty, but Lisa presented them with sensitivity and dignity. She accompanied the slides with a narrative that described the physiological effects of alcohol, the nature of the injuries caused in drinking and driving crashes, and the medical treatment and care of surviving victims.

Lisa also touched upon the social consequences of these accidents, emphasizing how very frequently victims are severely limited from leading normal lives; particularly, the extremely disruptive impact of family life which often ensues. The students were encouraged not to drink and to consider alternatives to operating a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol. A brochure depicting fun without alcohol was distributed to the students.

The following Sunday during the worship service, Joyce Michael, president, told the congregation of this special ministry. Envelopes were provided and an offering for Ashland Theological Seminary was received.

—The Tucson ladies respond to the monthly roll call with a Scripture verse each has learned during the month.

—The Faith, Hope, and Joy Circles and the Mothers' Club sponsored a unique all-girls picnic at the Ashland Park Street Church in May. Ginny Hoyt reported the theme was "This is My Father's World" and the fellowship hall was decorated as if we were having a picnic outside. Beautiful silk sunflowers were the centerpieces with smaller pots of sunflowers. These we learned were really "Dirt Dessert" served in a clay flower pot (lined with plastic wrap), delicious pudding covered with a thick layer of chocolate cooky crumbs and a few gummy worms positioned just right! But before we had dessert, a picnic supper of chicken, green beans, and parsleyed potatoes was served by the men of the church.

The ladies sang the hymn, "This is My Father's World" and "Arky, Arky," complete with hand motions (which pleased the girls, especially). The guest speakers were Jane Schnelker and Vicki Miller, who are Wildlife Rehabilitators near Mansfield. They described their care of wounded or orphaned birds and animals until each is ready to return to nature. They brought two which were recovering from injured wings — a great horned owl and a screech owl. This was a new aspect of Our Father's World.

—The Huntington Society makes benevolent contacts each month. In March 123 calls were made and 118 in February. What a boon to their pastor!

—Saturday evening, May 7, 45 women and girls of the Williamstown Church gathered for their annual banquet. DeAnn Oburn described the carry-in meal, which was delicious, combined with fellowship. It was even more enjoyable because the men served and did *all* the clean-up!

After the meal, the ladies moved to the sanctuary for the program. Barbara Main, president, welcomed everyone. A short reading, "Mother of the Bride," from Robert Fulghum's book *It Was on Fire When I Lay Down on It,* was given by DeAnn. Matha Schleinitz of Pleasant Hill spoke on "Houses Full of All Good Things." Using Deuteronomy 6:11 as her text, she encouraged us in our "family walk" with God, stressing that we need to place more importance on Him in our family life than on the things that we have and do as families.

The ladies concluded the evening with the hymn, "Faith of our Mothers," and with prayer.

—The Huntington WMS presented Jeff and Joan Sherlock, former missionaries to Macau, East Asia, and now at Huntington College, for their public service in March. Joan told of her work with the Chinese Women's Fellowship and her music ministry at the Macau Living Waters Church. In Macau, Jeff directed the English Language Program. He enjoyed teaching the Chinese people to speak English. He spoke of the importance of being prepared to witness for our Savior and sharing our love for Him with others, when we are given the opportunity.

—The Milledgeville Brethren Beacons wore their self-designed Easter bonnets at the April meeting. The judges rated the bonnets as follows: prettiest, Evelyn Hanna; silliest, Lucile Woessner; oldest, Lorraine Dennis; most original, Dorothy Ruth Glenn; most becoming, Lillian Thorngren.

They made a Precious Moments quilt top for quilting at Conference.

—At the February meeting members of the Lanark Friendship Circle brought large shoe boxes, to be packed for the college students from their congregation. Each member also brought 1 or 2 items for each box: snacks (candy, chips, homemade cookies, microwave popcorn) and school supplies (Post-it Notes, stamps, highlighters, pens, bookmarks). Everyone signed the card to include in each box. The boxes were mailed to arrive the week of Valentine's Day. This is an annual project, between 13–15 are mailed each year. This reminds the students they are missed and loved!

District Doings

The SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT Conference was held April 23. Susan Kidd reported that the district offering combined with the fall ingathering for the Krypton Brethren Church totaled $1,243. Lois Sluss, the pastor's wife, reported the church is moving to a regular church status; their average attendance is 60. This calls for a prayer of praise! Next year's project is the Southeast Christian Fellowship in Washington with Pastor Rickey Bolden.

For the program, the Hagerstown ladies gave inspirational presentations about Living for Jesus in different settings; such as, homemaking, secretary, the business world, nursing, and teaching. Different women from the audience shared in each of these areas. Doris Barnett led the group in singing "Living for Jesus."

EXCERPTS FROM THE WMS BOARD MEETING

Kitty Winfield and Donna Stoffer are the WMS representatives to the Missionary Board. President Shirley Black invited Kitty to give a Mission Board update when the women met May 7.

—Sudhir Kumar's application for a visa was denied; therefore, he will not be with his parents, Prasanth and Nirmala Kumar, this summer.

—At its budget meeting in November, the Missionary Board had to cut programs because of increased costs. Kitty stated that giving to missions is not less, but costs are more. The women are concerned for the continuation of María Miranda's radio program. The Fuller Evangelistic Association sponsors a large portion of the program, and it is hoped that various ministries of The Brethren Church can underwrite the remainder. The Missionary Board support continues through June 1994.

—The ladies discussed the two WMS publications. The new study theme, which Jeanette Sullivan has developed in the *Devotional Guide*, is "A Legacy of Faith." The *Newsletter* needs news from each society in order to fulfill its purpose — being a communicator. Reports of benevolent work, Mother and Daughter gatherings, special activities, and comments about your meetings are welcomed.

—We discussed goals. We chuckled over the struggle some societies have in still planning a public service. Last year that goal was changed. No longer do you *have* to have a public service! Goal 4 is "Sponsor a special ministry, service, or activity in which (a) The purpose of WMS is promoted, and (b) An offering is received for the Seminary." This is one way in which we fulfill part of the purpose of WMS: "disseminate the principles of Christianity" by helping to prepare future pastors, teachers, and missionaries. Hence, our annual offering.

—Discussed changes in the Constitution for clarification.

—We talked about money. These are methods some societies use for money-raising: friendship basket, mite boxes, unified budget, auctions, and offerings. And then someone asked, "Why do we have so many offerings?" This, too, is part of the purpose of WMS: "to raise funds for enlarging the borders of the church."

The Board will meet Monday afternoon, August 8, before General Conference. If you have questions, comments, and suggestions, please send them to Shirley Black, president, or to me, *Newsletter* editor.

Missionary Miscellany *continued*

Mario and Laura Fuentes in California. The August missionaries are Tim and Jan Eagle and Todd and Tracy Ruggles in Mexico.

Dan and Ann DeVeny have relocated to Dan's new assignment. Their address is Chaplain and Mrs. Daniel J. DeVeny, 112 Coachman Drive, Yorktown, Virginia 23693.

President's Pen *(continued)*

What a comfort it is to know that we can pray about a need and leave it in the hands of our wonderful Lord. Our pastor preached one Sunday on "Fix Your Eyes on Jesus." He is to be our model, our pattern, and our priority. If life has been difficult lately, try spending some time with Jesus. He's our Comforter.

It will soon be time for our annual Conference in Ashland. This past year has gone by so quickly. We will have two business sessions plus our WMS luncheon Thursday noon. It will be a light meal, since the Missionary Board banquet is at 5:00 that same evening.

Nirmala Kumar will be with us and will bring greetings from the Brethren in India. Plan to be a part of the Conference. The project offering will be taken after the Thursday luncheon. Our project is year one of a two-year endowment to train workers in Malaysia.

I look forward to seeing you at Conference.

In Christian Love,
Shirley

IN ANTICIPATION OF THE WMS CONFERENCE

August 8–12, 1994

The Conference schedule is not as usual, due to a special and important outreach workshop for the General Conference on Wednesday. This is the WMS meeting schedule:

Tuesday: 1:30–4:30 business
Thursday: 12:00–2:00 luncheon; cost is $6.25
2:15–4:30 business

The quilt and several contributed items will be auctioned off Thursday night.

Joan Merrill has updated the *Service Guide*. Two copies per society will be available. *Devotional Guides* and membership lists will also be distributed.

The WMS Project Offering is funds for Endowment for training leaders in Malaysia.

Two-year goal: $25,000

The Editor's Ending

Dear Friend,

Studies show that up to 75 percent of communication is ignored, misunderstood, or forgotten. In case this is true for us, some items are mentioned and then elaborated on for extra emphasis. We don't want you to overlook Conference plans and we do want to inform you about the WMS board meetings, which explains why we will make some recommendations.

After Conference, please return your membership list and dues to Joanne Kroft. In fact, all money for national WMS (dues, project and thank-offerings, world relief, seminary) throughout the year comes to Joanne. Make *all* checks payable to National WMS and send to Joanne Kroft. As financial secretary, she credits your society for the offering and JoAnn Seaman, treasurer, disburses the funds.

Of course, district dues and offerings go to your district treasurer.

It's true, we do talk alot about money, but think what we do with it. Our offerings go where we can't: to world missions in India, Malaysia, Colombia, Argentina, Paraguay, Mexico, and Peru; to home mission churches and church planting sites, to the orphanage in India, for seminary training in Malaysia, Ashland University Campus Christian Ministry, Riverside Christian Training School, Ashland University scholarship, Ashland Theological Seminary, and to the publications. We women stretch the dollar as much as possible!

When Mr. Norman Edwards, the consultant who worked with the Special Committee on Organization and Finance for the denomination, surveyed the finances of the denomination, he recommended a revival in the area of biblical stewardship. And Larry Burkett, the Christian financial planner, reported that two-thirds of Jesus' parables talk about money. Jesus always used material things, like money, as His primary tool for teaching. And furthermore, in 1887 "the (Conference) delegates authorized the women to form a national society for raising funds to send an evangelist among the churches." So wrote Jerry and Julie Flora in *Faith and Fortitude.*

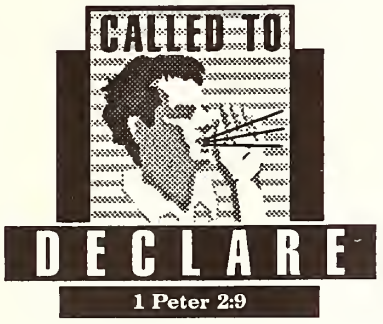
There are pros and cons on every issue: some people tithe, some don't; some give to The Brethren Church and its ministries, some don't. This is part of the problem — we Brethren need to support our Brethren ministries.

Not only are we Women Meant to Serve, but we are also Wise and Moral Stewards!

Your friend,
Joan

General Conference Preview

The 106th General Conference of The Brethren Church



August 8–12 at Ashland University

The annual gathering of Brethren for inspiration, fellowship, and business is fast approaching. A schedule of events and an introduction to the inspirational speaker were included in last month's EVANGELIST. On this and the following page is additonal information about this 106th General Conference.

Conference Moderator

Rev. Russell Gordon, Director of U.S. Ministries and Church Growth for the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church, will moderate this summer's General Conference. He will present an address during the opening celebration on Monday evening and preside over the business sessions on Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday mornings.



Rev. Gordon (52) grew up in South Bend, Ind., where he became a member of the Ardmore First Brethren Church. He attended Ashland University, was ordained in 1967, and served Brethren pastorates in Williamstown, Ohio (1963–68); Fort Scott, Kans. (1968–74); and Bradenton, Fla. (1974–1989). He has served in his present position with the Missionary Board since July 1989. This is his first stint as General Conference moderator, but he served as moderator of the Midwest District for two years and of the Florida District one year.

Rev. Gordon is married to the former Sherrie Humphrey of Williamstown, Ohio. They have two sons, Ryan and David, and one granddaughter.

Other Conference Highlights

Thomas L. Youngblood, Director of U.S. Ministries for the International Bible Society, will be the speaker at the Tuesday evening worship service and lead an all-Conference seminar, "Love Your Neighbor to Life," Wednesday morning and afternoon. More information and a picture of Mr. Youngblood were included in the June issue (*p. 13*).

World Relief Soup Luncheon. Dr. Arthur E. Gay, Jr., president of World Relief of the National Association of Evangelicals, will be the speaker at the World Relief Soup Luncheon Tuesday noon of Conference. Dr. Gay, who served for 18 years as senior pastor of the South Park Church of Park Ridge, Ill., before going to World Relief in 1991, will be no stranger to long-time Conference attenders, for he was the Conference inspiration speaker in 1987. There is no charge for this luncheon (an offering will be taken), but Brethren who plan to attend are asked to make reservations (*using the form on p. 15 of the June issue*), so that adequate table-seating can be arranged.



Concert of Prayer. Prayer—not talk about prayer but actual praying—will be the substance of the Wednesday evening service, as faculty and students from Ashland Theological Seminary lead the Brethren in a concert of prayer. Prayers of praise and adoration, thanksgiving, confession, and consecration as well as prayers for missions, leadership, and encouragement will be offered by those leading the concert and by those attending. Interspersed throughout the service will be music, both congregational singing and anthems by the seminary choir.

Missionary Board Banquet and Program. A challenge to full-time Christian service in overseas or home missions will be the emphasis of the Missionary Board Banquet and program on Thursday evening. Rickey Bolden, pastor of Southeast Christian Fellowship (formerly the Washington, D.C., Brethren Church) is the scheduled speaker for the worship program following the banquet. A commissioning for the participants in STAKE, the innovative church-planting project in the Florida District, will also be held during this service. Brethren missionaries Prasanth and Nirmala Kumar and Allen Baer, who will be at Conference, will also be featured during the evening. (*Reservations are required for the banquet, but the program is open to all.*)

New Moderator's Challenge. Rev. Reilly Smith, the 1995 moderator, will introduce next year's theme in a message during the final session of this year's Conference (at 10:45 a.m. on Friday). Rev. Smith is pastor of the Mulvane, Kans., Brethren Church. [⇧]

General Conference Preview

Conference Business Sessions

General Conference Executive Council (GCEC) will not be bringing any major proposal for delegate action at this General Conference. After spending much time considering "The Brethren Church Financial and Organizational Study" prepared by Norman L. Edwards, a Christian consultant from Seattle, Wash., GCEC decided it was not ready to present an organizational proposal for Conference action.

Because of the magnitude and importance of the matters under consideration, GCEC wants to allow ample opportunity for imput and discussion by a large number of Brethren. Therefore, a time for guided, small-group brainstorming and discussion is planned for the Thursday morning business session. Delegates are urged to come to Conference with a clear and open mind and prepared by extensive prayer for divine insight.

Local Church Goals. The only specific item of business to be presented to General Conference by GCEC is the Proposed 1995 Local Church Goals. Copies of these proposed goals were sent to pastors and moderators in *Leadership Letter*.

Elections. An important part of the Conference business sessions is the election of members to Executive Council, commissions, and committees. This election will be held during the Tuesday session. Nominess for Executive Council and the commissions are printed below.

Nominees for General Conference Executive Council

The following candidates have been submitted by the Nominating Committee. Those elected will serve a three-year term on the Executive Council (unless otherwise indicated). One person will be elected for each position. Delegates will have opportunity to make nominations from the floor on Tuesday morning. Before persons may be nominated, they shall have given prior consent to serve if elected.

Moderator-Elect (Moderator in 1995–96).

Dr. Richard E. Allison, Ashland, Ohio. Professor of Christian Education at Ashland Theological Seminary. A former pastor, he served as General Conference moderator in 1969.

Member at Large

Gerald Barr, Hagerstown, Md. Pastor of the Hagerstown First Brethren Church. Has served for several years as chair of the General Conference Church Polity Committee and a number of years as secretary-treasurer of the National Association of Brethren Church Elders.

Mark Britton, Derby, Kans. Pastor of the Derby First Brethren Church.

G. Emery Hurd, Cheyenne, Wyo. Pastor of the Cheyenne Brethren Church, he formerly chaired the Social Responsibilities Commission of The Brethren Church.

Member at Large (to fill the one year remaining of the term of Rev. James Miller)

Raymond Aspinall, Bryan, Ohio. Pastor of the Bryan First Brethren Church and former Brethren missionary (for 31 years) in Argentina.

Plains Region Representative (Central and Indiana Districts)

William Shipman, South Bend, Ind. Pastor of the Ardmore First Brethren Church.

Dennis Sigle, Burlington, Ind. Pastor of the Burlington First Brethren Church.

Jeanette Sullivan, Milledgeville, Ill. Member (and wife of the pastor) of the Milledgeville Brethren Church and editor of the W.M.S. *Devotional Guide*. She has been a member of GCEC for the past 1½ years, completing the unexpired term of the late Rev. Mark Baker.

Nominees for Brethren Church Ministries Commissions

The General Conference Executive Council has selected the following persons for nomination to serve on Brethren Church Ministries commissions for 1994–95. Delegates may nominate from the floor persons for these positions. Those nominated shall have previously expressed their willingness to serve if elected and their ability to attend the two scheduled commission meetings on October 14–15, 1994, and March 17–18, 1995, in Ashland.

Spiritual Formation Commission

Rev. Brian Moore has been nominated to serve as chair of the Spiritual Formation Commission. Moore has been pastor of the St. James, Md., Brethren Church since 1983. He has served on this commission since its formation in 1992. He is completing work on a Doctor of Ministry degree at Ashland Theological Seminary. Moore was General Conference moderator in 1981.

Nominated for the four commission member positions are:

Mrs. Carolyn Cooksey, librarian at Ashland University and a member of the commission since 1992.

Dr. Jerry Flora, professor of New Testament and theology at Ashland Theological Seminary and a member of the commission since 1992.

Mrs. Delores Keplinger, former public school teacher and member of the commission since 1992.

Rev. Fred Brandon, pastor of the North Georgetown, Ohio, First Brethren Church, and formerly a member of the Worship Commission.

Mr. Kurt Stout, senior at Ashland Theological Seminary and a member of the Leadership Development Commission since 1992.

Miss Louise Waller, self-employed and serves as a Passing On the Promise co-coordinator for Northwest Brethren Chapel, Tucson, Ariz.

Evangelism & Church Growth Commission

Mrs. Cindy Smith is being nominated to chair the Evangelism & Church Growth Commission. Smith is an occupational therapist at St. Joseph Medical Center in Wichita, Kans., and recently completed her Bachelor of Science degree in human resources management. She is currently Midwest District secretary. She has served on the commission since 1993. *(continued on next page)*



Preparing to distribute Bibles in Juarez, Mexico, are short-term mission team members (front, l. to r.) Katie Shepherd, Christina Godefrin, Kurt Stout, Beth Schwartzwalder, (back, l. to r.) two YWAM staff members, Sarah Cramer, Tawna Galbreath, Christy Van Duyne, and Michelle Mathews. Team members not shown are Jennifer Thomas, Jeff Gilmer, and Amber Corbitt.

Eleven Young People Have "Awesome" Experience On Short-Term Missions Project to Juarez, Mexico

He who began a good work in you will be faithful to complete it to the day of Jesus Christ. Philippians 1:6

ELEVEN YOUNG PEOPLE felt the good work of the Holy Spirit in their lives during the Brethren-sponsored short-term missions project June 11–18 to Juarez, Mexico.

On June 8, eight young ladies from Indiana (Tawna Galbreath, Michelle Mathews, Sarah Cramer), Ohio (Katie Shepherd, Beth Schwartzwalder, Christy Van Duyne), Virginia (Amber Corbitt) and Florida (Christina Godefrin), along with their co-leaders Jeff Gilmer, Kurt Stout, and Jennifer Thomas, all met in Ashland to begin the two days of training before going to Juarez.

With a couple of exceptions, no one knew anyone else on the team before the trip. But at the end of the trip, Tawna Galbreath stated, "I gained new brothers and sisters rather than new friends."

After a couple of days of orientation and team-bonding activities, we flew out of Cleveland airport on our way to Juarez. Many seeds were planted on our flight down and back. We were so excited about the missions project that we told anyone who would listen where we were going and what we would be doing while in Juarez.

Upon our arrival in El Paso, Texas, we picked up our rental van and met Kevin and Christy Donnelly, the Youth With A Mission (YWAM) staff members who would lead our group and assist with translation during the week.

God's presence was evident when we arrived in El Paso. When I went to pick up our 15-passenger van, the clerk told me we would not be allowed to take the van over the border due to a new policy with all rental agencies. When I explained what we would be doing and showed him our confirmation number, he called the manager at home, and the manager gave us the okay to take the van over the border. The clerk said he couldn't explain why we were given the permission. No explanation was needed as far as I was concerned; God was with us and that was enough for me.

Sunday through Tuesday, we worked at a church in a farming community on the south side of Juarez. On Sunday, we lead the entire worship service, with songs in Spanish and English, plus special music sung in Spanish by Kurt, Jeff, Christy, Katie, and Christina. Then the rest of the team presented puppet plays and skits. Kurt concluded the service with a message in English that was translated into Spanish.

After the sermon, the pastor came up and told the congregation (with tears running down her face) how thankful she was for our group. She felt that God had sent us to encourage the members of the congregation, most of whom were young ladies about our same age.

On Monday and Tuesday, we continued working at the church building, doing cleaning and painting and also building a storage shed.

On Wednesday, we helped YWAM staff around the Ministry Center, which was our home for the week in Juarez. We mixed concrete and helped put up a power pole, so that electricity could be run into the new building that would house YWAM staff and the free clinic for pregnant women and children. We also helped install ceiling fans to help cut down on the 107-degree heat we experienced throughout our stay.

That evening we began to experience the strongest bond I believe any of us

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Nominated for the four commission member positions are:

Rev. Stephen Cole, pastor of the Newark, Ohio, Brethren Church and a member of the commission since 1993.

Rev. Thomas Conrad, founding pastor of the Greenwood, Ind., Brethren Fellowship.

Mrs. Cheryl Ennis, a Passing On the Promise co-coordinator for the Ardmore First Brethren Church, South Bend, Ind., and serves as a congregational advisor for another POtP congregation.

Rev. Emery Hurd, pastor of the Cheyenne, Wyo., Brethren Church and former chair of the Social Responsibilities Commission; also was state executive secretary of the Wyoming Billy Graham Crusade.

Leadership Development Commission

Dr. Mary Ellen Drushal is nominated to chair the Leadership Development Commission. Dr. Drushal is academic dean and associate professor of Christian education and church administration at Ashland Theological Seminary. She has chaired the Spiritual Formation Commission since 1992 and was General Conference moderator in 1990.

Nominated for the four commission member positions are:

Dr. James Hollinger, a surgeon from Goshen, Ind., and a member of the commission since 1992.

Mrs. Sherry Van Duyne, director of Christian education of Ashland Park Street Brethren Church and a member of the commission since 1993.

Mr. Roy Andrews, associate pastor of the Nappanee, Ind., First Brethren Church.

Mr. Jeff Gilmer, serving as a tentmaker at the Greenwood, Ind., Brethren Fellowship and co-leader of the short-term mission team to Mexico this summer.



Brethren who received degrees at seminary graduation on May 28 included (l. to r.) Rev. James F. Black, Sherry Van Duyne, Dr. Brenda Colijn, Jackie Rhoades, Brian Bolinger, (not pictured) Rev. Larry Baker, and Billy Hesketh.

Seven Brethren Receive Degrees May 28th In Ashland Theological Seminary Ceremony

Ashland, Ohio — Seven members of The Brethren Church received degrees from Ashland Theological Seminary on Saturday, May 28, during the seminary's annual commencement ceremony.

Rev. Larry R. Baker, pastor of the South Bend, Ind., First Brethren Church, received a Master of Divinity degree. Rev. Baker did his residency work at the seminary some years ago and recently completed his project and some additional hours in order to receive his degree. For his project, he wrote the leader's manual for *Reaching Out in Word and Deed*, one of the units of study in the Passing On the Promise process.

Rev. James F. Black, senior pastor of The Brethren Church in New Lebanon, Ohio, received the Doctor of Ministry degree. This is his second degree from ATS; he received the Master of Divinity degree in 1984. His doctoral dissertation was on conflict in the church.

Brian L. Bolinger, a member of the University Church in Ashland, received the Master of Divinity degree. While in seminary, he served as an intern for the University Church. His future plans are for service as a church planter in Washington State.

(continued next column)

Brenda B. Colijn, a member of Smoky Row Brethren Church in Columbus, Ohio, received a Master of Arts degree (with an interdisciplinary major in New Testament and theology). Dr. Colijn (she has a Ph.D. in English in addition to her seminary degree) is an adjunct instructor at ATS and also does free-lance work in computer-based training. She is a frequent writer for the EVANGELIST.

William (Billy) A. Hesketh, a former member of the Pleasant View Brethren Church in Vandergrift, Pa., and now a member and Pastor of Children and Youth Ministries at the Jefferson Brethren Church in Goshen, Ind., received a Master of Arts degree in Christian Education.

Vivian (Jackie) Rhoades, a member of Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, received a Master of Arts degree with a concentration in biblical studies. She is currently employed part time as secretary and newsletter editor at the Northern Ohio District Office of the Church of the Brethren.

Sherry L. Van Duyne, a member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, received a Master of Arts degree in Christian Education. She is employed as Coordinator of Christian Education for Park Street Church.

A total of 137 degrees were conferred by the seminary.

Winfields to Spend Summer Teaching English in China

Ashland, Ohio — Richard and Kay Winfield will spend seven weeks in July and August in China.

The Winfields will teach English at the Guangdong Education College in the city of Guangzhou (Canton) in Guangdong Province of China. They will be members of a team of eight Americans teaching Chinese high school English teachers at this college under the auspices of the English Language Institute/China of San Dimas, California.

"Kitty" Winfield is an instructor at Ashland University, where she teaches English to international students in the ACCESS program. Dick is Editor of Publications (including the EVANGELIST) for The Brethren Church. The General Conference Executive Council granted him a two-month continuing-education leave in order to go to China. He will return to the U.S. in time to complete the September issue.

A time of prayer setting aside the Winfields for special service in China was conducted at Park Street Brethren Church on June 19 by Pastor Arden Gilmer and Rev. James R. Black.

(continued from page 13)

have ever known. The presence of the Holy Spirit was so strong that we were able to share our deepest hurts and reveal our inner selves. We became a true community of believers and of prayer, enabling us to encourage one another throughout the week.

On Thursday, the team went to YWAM's orphanage and got to play and work with the children. We shared our skits and puppet shows, which the children loved. During our stay at the orphanage at least two team members felt God's call to minister to children in an orphanage setting. One of the two in particular said that she wants to go back to Juarez to work at this orphanage, and another team member said that she feels called to the mission field as a result of this project.

Friday provided yet another awesome experience for the team, when we went out to distribute Spanish Bibles and to invite people to our special evening church service. We got a chance to practice our Spanish, and we also distributed more than 60 Bibles. As a result, more than 60 people attended the service, instead of the usual 15–20. By the end of the service, several people had come forward for prayer by the team.

God did some amazing works during this project. Everyone who participated wants to go back next year. Our team learned that no matter what, God loves us, and we don't have to prove anything to gain His love. God loves us because He made us a new creation.

I personally want to thank the Brethren Church for giving me the opportunity to co-lead this awesome team. I also want to thank everyone who prayed for and supported us during this project. The Holy Spirit was definitely with us.

— Jennifer Thomas

Perspectives on the Lord's Supper is Theme of Believers' Church Conference Hosted by ATS

Ashland, Ohio — "The Lord's Supper: Believers' Church Perspectives" was the theme of the eleventh Believers' Church Conference, held June 1–4 at Ashland Theological Seminary.

The object of the Believers' Church conferences, which began in 1967, has been to bring together representatives of various churches that practice believers' baptism in order to study and discuss issues of common interest. This conference was both planned and hosted by Ashland Seminary.

The conference was framed in worship, beginning with a worship service in the University Chapel on Wednesday evening and ending with a devotional time in the seminary chapel on Saturday morning. Jerry Flora led devotions each day of the conference.

On Wednesday evening, Myron Augsburger was the main speaker, and the Believers' Church choir, directed by Ron Sprunger, led the congregation in music. The choir was composed of members of many different churches, some local but others some distance away.

Topics addressed at the conference included biblical and historical overviews of the practice of the Lord's Supper, the theology of the Lord's Supper, the relationship between the Lord's Supper and our view of the church, the relationship of the Lord's Supper to our doctrine of last things, and the Brethren practice of Threefold Communion.

Several of the speakers who were not from the Brethren tradition argued that Believers' churches should restore the New Testament form of Communion, especially the agape meal. Some even argued for the practice of footwashing. One speaker stated that only the Brethren among the Believers' churches have observed the New Testament form. As part of the conference, attenders participated in an observance of Threefold Communion at Park Street Brethren Church, led by Dr. Fred Finks.

The seminary was well-represented at the conference. Dale R. Stoffer and Ben Witherington, III, presented papers. Conveners of sessions included Richard Allison, David Baker, Brenda Colijn, Mary Ellen Drushal, Luke Keefer, John Shultz, and Jody Watson.

Speakers from outside the seminary included Everett Ferguson, William Estep, Merle Strege, Donald Durnbaugh, Robert Clouse, Jeff Bach, Chris Thomas, and Marlin Jeschke. Besides Brethren, Mennonites, Baptists, and Pentecostals, members of several other denominations—including Disciples of Christ, Quaker, Seventh Day Adventist, Free Methodist, Moravian, and AME—gave their distinctive perspectives to the discussion. Representatives of the Catholic and Russian Orthodox traditions also engaged in dialogue with the participants.

— reported by Brenda Colijn

[Our] core problem is not that we are too passionate about bad things, but that we are not passionate enough about good things.

— Larry Crabb in Finding God *(ZondervanPublishingHouse, 1993)*

The Bible is a book of paradoxes. If we want to live, we must die to self. If we want to achieve greatness, we must humble ourselves and become servants. If we desire to receive, we must first give.

— Charles Stanley in A Touch of His Peace *(ZondervanPublishingHouse, 1993)*

Margaret Lowery Scholarship Guidelines Announced

Margaret Lowery served for nearly 40 years in the Krypton, Kentucky, area as a Brethren home missionary. When Margaret died, moneys were contributed by family and friends for use as a scholarship fund for a young person living in the area where Margaret served. The guidelines for this scholarship were recently completed, and announcement of the scholarship is being made in the Krypton area. The guidelines are being printed here so that Brethren across the denomination may be aware of this scholarship.

The **Margaret Lowery Scholarship** is made possible by the family and friends of Margaret Lowery. Margaret served as a missionary, nurse, and educator at Krypton, Ky., from 1953–1990 under the auspices of the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church, Ashland, Ohio. She served in 4-H, Scouting, and various other outreach ministries. She influenced the lives of countless persons and always desired to see young people continue to prepare for life through education.



Margaret Lowery

A post-high-school scholarship will be granted to a senior student graduating from the Buckhorn High School, Perry County Central High School, or Riverside Christian High School. It will be called the Margaret Lowery Scholarship.

To be eligible for the scholarship, a student must live in the Krypton community or Krypton voting precinct. A student whose family has lived in the Krypton community but now lives in a neighboring community and maintains close ties and frequent communication with the Krypton community is also eligible to receive the scholarship. The Krypton Brethren Church may assist the school in determining the eligibility of a student. The scholarship will be considered on the basis of need for financial assistance, potential for leadership, interest in youth work, Christian character values, and absence of substance abuse.

The scholarship may be for attendance at a college, a vocational school, or a trade business training center. It will be granted to students from the three high schools on a three-year rotating basis. If agreeable to the schools, a school may postpone its turn to receive the scholarship for one year.

The choice of recipient will be made by the administration and staff of each high school.

Scholarship moneys will be kept in escrow in an appropriate financial institution. The scholarship granted each year will consist of the interest gained from the principal each calendar year.

In the event that the scholarship would cease to be granted, the money remaining would become the property of the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church for use as this board desired.

Contributions to the Scholarship Fund may be made through Krypton Brethren Church, HC 30, Box 1050, Krypton, KY 41754; or they may be sent to the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church, 524 College Ave., Ashland, OH 44805.

— reported by Rev. James Sluss

Opening the Kingdom with Love and Prayer Is Theme of Indiana District Conference

Shipshewana, Ind. — "Opening the Kingdom with the Keys of Love and Prayer" was the theme of the Indiana District Conference, held June 3–4 at the Brethren Retreat Center under the leadership of the moderator, Rev. Jim Thomas.

Following afternoon auxiliary sessions, the full conference began on Friday evening with a worship service. Rev. Brad Hardesty led singing that was interspersed with periods of prayer, and then Dr. G. William Benz, president of Ashland University, brought a message. He gave a challenge for Christians to combine "being" with "doing."

The business portion of the conference was held on Saturday. Moderator Thomas set the stage for business by sharing a message on the theme of the conference. He also presented five recommendations: (1) that every church now involved in Passing On the Promise or some other evangelistic training program continue with renewed vigor; (2) that every church not pursuing such a course begin doing so; (3) that every church conduct a series of services emphasizing the necessity of exemplifying Christ-like love; (4) that every church conduct a series of services emphasizing prayer as it pertains to strengthening the saints and spreading the gospel; (5) that every church hold at least one special fund-raising event to help raise funds for church-planting in the Indiana District. The conference adopted his recommendations

Rev. Jim Black, Executive Director of the national Missionary Board, thanked the conference for prayers for his health during his recent surgery, then gave a report of Brethren World Missions. Rev. Russ Gordon, Director of U.S. Ministries and Church Growth for the Missionary Board, reported on Brethren mission outreach here is the U.S. Then, putting on his hat as General Conference moderator, he distributed a report from Rev. Ron Waters, Director of Brethren Church ministries. He also encouraged everyone to attend General Conference in August.

Dave Cooksey, Director of Pastoral Ministries for The Brethren Church, exhorted the conference to be involved in kingdom business, not just church work. Paul Sluss gave a report from Ashland Theological Seminary, including the news that nearly 40 Brethren students are enrolled in ATS programs.

Reports from various district officers and ministries were received, and elections were held. Steve Williams also presented the need for the district to adopt restated Articles of Incorporation in order to keep pace with changes in the law.

At the beginning of the afternoon session, the Missions Ministry gave a presentation on planting churches in the U.S., including its vision for a network of new churches in Indiana. More district ministry reports followed, the restated Articles of Incorporation were adopted, and the election results were announced. Rev. Tim Garner is the new moderator-elect, and Ron Burns was re-elected as secretary.

Delegates also decided to hold next year's conference June 2–3 at the Retreat Center. Rev. Thomas passed the gavel to incoming moderator Rev. Duane Dickson, who gave a closing challenge and then adjourned the conference.

— reported by Ron Burns, district secretary

Raystown Shows Appreciation To Pastor Alfred Chamberlain

Saxton, Pa. — Members of the Raystown Brethren Church held a surprise appreciation day on Sunday, May 15, for Pastor Alfred Chamberlain and his family.

Like many Brethren gatherings, the event began with good food, at a fellowship meal after the morning worship service. Following the meal, Penny Weimert emceed a program in honor of the Chamberlain family.

The program included a question and answer game about the life of Pastor and Mrs. Chamberlain; expressions of appreciation and encouragement for the pastor and his family; and presentation of gifts. Among the gifts given to the family were several gag gifts, including: a bottle of bubble liquid, to help them remember the bubbly spiritual times in their lives; bath beads for Mrs. Chamberlain, to help her relax since she is always on the go; a back scrubber and soap for the pastor, to help relieve back aches after a hard day's work blacktopping driveways and parking lots. A bottle of aspirin for son Travis, who graduated from high school in June, and now the headaches begin; and bubble gum in a snuff can for son Chris, just in case he's tempted to chew snuff.



Pastor Alfred and Bonnie Chamberlain and sons Travis (l.) and Chris (r.), with the gifts they received on Pastor Appreciation Day.

The program concluded with a circle of prayer for the pastor, his family, and the Raystown Church.

— reported by Susan Weimert

Eight Brethren Receive Degrees May 18th at Ashland University

Ashland, Ohio — Eight Brethren students received degrees May 18 from Ashland University, including:

Paul Bechtel, member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church; B.S. in Education with a major in elementary education.

Loreen Drushal, member of Park Street Brethren Church (daughter of J. Michael and Dr. Mary Ellen Drushal); B.A. with majors in psychology and philosophy.

Brent Grimm, member of the Milford, Ind., First Brethren Church; B.S. in Education with a major in elementary ed.

Annalee Hoover, member of Park Street Brethren Church (and former member of the North Georgetown, Ohio, First Brethren Church); B.A. with majors in religion and biology.

Geneva Oburn, member of the Pleasant Hill, Ohio, First Brethren Church (daughter of Pastor and Mrs. Eugene Oburn); Bachelor of Music with a major in music.

Anthony (Tony) Price, member of The Brethren Church in New Lebanon, Ohio; B.S. in Education with a major in elementary ed.

Jennifer Sluss, attends the University Church in Ashland (wife of Brethren seminary student Paul Sluss); B.S. in Education with a major in English.

Angela Weidenhamer, member of Park Street Brethren Church (daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Bradley Weidenhamer); B.A. degree with a major in music.

Little Crusader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

Hi boys and girls!

My son, Jordan, and I visited the grave of our cat, Scotty, the other day. Scotty was such a neat cat, and we all loved him very much. Jordan asked me if Scotty was in heaven. I'm not sure that animals go to heaven, but if they do, Scotty would be there. Jordan then asked me how Scotty could be in heaven, since his body was in the ground. Wow, that's a hard question to answer!

The Bible tells us in 1 Corinthians 15:51 that when Jesus comes again, we will all be changed. We will be given new bodies in heaven. This is wonderful news for people who are in wheelchairs because their bodies didn't grow correctly or because they have lost arms or legs. It is also wonderful news for people who are sick in bed for a long time.

Jesus wants us to have perfect bodies in heaven, with no sickness or pain. When we die, our bodies stay on earth while our spirits go to be with God. But when Jesus returns, He will raise up our bodies and change them into the greatest, most spectacular bodies He can make. Won't that be terrific?!

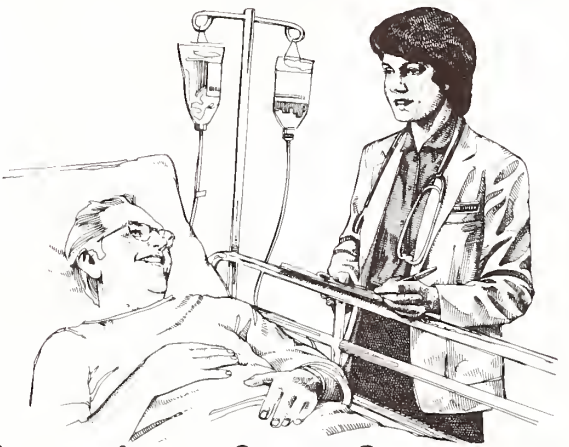


Figure Up the Message

Do the following addition and subtraction problems. Then, in the key at the bottom of the page, find the letter that equals the number in each answer. Write these letters on the lines below the numbers to spell out a message from God.

Jesus gives us

3	5	4	1	10	6	4	0	2	
+3	- 1	+5	+1	- 3	- 3	+1	+4	+6	
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	

in heaven.



2=b 3=d 4=e 5=i 6=n 7=o 8=s 9=w

Drama at Mt. Olive Provides Opportunity To "See" and Respond to the Gospel Story

Pineville, Va. — During the intermission of a presentation of the musical drama "Sacrifice of Glory" at the Mt. Olive Brethren Church, a mother walked up to me with a smile on her face. "My daughter thought you actually healed that man with the withered hand," she said. "I had to work hard to convince her that you were not Jesus; that you were only pretending to be Jesus."

This is just one example of the impressions we were able to make at our church when people came to "see" the gospel story. A 32-member choir and 51-member drama cast performed "Sacrifice of Glory" on March 24, 25, 26, and 27 at the Mt. Olive Brethren Church. A total of 1,005 people attended the four presentations.



Mary Magdalene (Kathy Good) and a blind man (David Fitzsimons) come to Jesus for healing.

The choir presented twelve songs plus a special solo, "Watch the Lamb," by Kris Morris. The emotional high of the production occurred near the end of this song, as the bloody and bruised body of Jesus on the cross was raised for all to see. Many wept openly as the reality of Jesus' brutal death took hold of them.

The play contained two acts, with two stories being portrayed simultaneously. The presentation begins with an aged Simon Peter in jail telling other prisoners and the guards about his time with Jesus. At the end of act two, Peter is escorted to his death by Romans soldiers. As he departs, he cries out in a thunderous and thought-provoking manner, "You have seen and you have heard. Now what will you do with Jesus?" The room was totally quiet as those in attendance pondered the depth of that question.

The other story centered on the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The feeding of the 5,000, healing of the multitudes, and the Last Supper are highlighted in the first act. Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, His arrest, trial, and crucifixion build up great suspense in the second act. One mother brought her son to see "Jesus" after the play to assure the boy that Jesus was okay. He had stood on his tiptoes watching the body of Christ as He was carried out in a sheet. Not even the resurrection scene was enough to convince him that Jesus was alive. Like Thomas of old, he needed to touch Jesus.

Henry Lineweaver directed the choir for the presentation, and Lois Johnson, assisted by Gwen Armentrout, directed the drama cast. Linden and Debra Seekford did the lighting, Dwight Good and Bud Lam were responsible for props, Deidre Connellee and Tammy Berkshire did make-up, and Mary Evelyn Huffman helped with the costumes.

Nothing in my 12 years of ministry has brought more pleasure, joy, and bonding than this production. Three months of hard work and of juggling schedules produced rewards we shall treasure forever. My hat is off to the 93 people at Mt. Olive who helped make all this possible.

Special recognition goes to David Fitzsimons, who portrayed one of the disciples and also a blind man. David made it to each production, even though his wife underwent open-heart surgery two days before the first performance. He drove 80 miles to be at the play and then 80 miles back to Winchester to be with Leathia, his wife. It was this kind of sacrifice and commitment that helped make this production so successful.

— Fred Miller, pastor

Winning the Lost is Focus of Midwest District Conference

Falls City, Nebr. — The Midwest District Conference, held June 10–12 at the Falls City First Brethren Church, began with an interesting twist: Moderator Chris Nelson's flight to the conference was delayed, so the conference began without a moderator.

Rev. Reilly Smith led the opening worship service Friday evening, and the Joy Belles, a women's gospel singing group from Falls City, performed an inspirational concert of contemporary and traditional gospel favorites. Moderator Nelson arrived during the concert—in time to present his address. Using Mark 16:15 as his text, he spoke about preaching the gospel everywhere we go.

Rev. Reilly Smith and William Winter spoke on Saturday morning. Using the familiar text in John 3:16–17, Rev. Smith preached about how we can each W-I-N-O-N-E. He used the acrostic to deliver a six-point plan for sharing our faith. Winter reported on the work that is beginning in Thornton, Colo., to plant a new Brethren church. He related several stories that illustrated God's leading in the Winters' move to Denver, their hunt for jobs, purchase of a home, and the assembling of a church-planting team. His enthusiasm really inspired the delegates.

Rev. David Cooksey, Director of Pastoral Ministries for The Brethren Church, spoke to the conference on Saturday afternoon about commitment to Christ and His church. He encouraged steadfastness, but also growing flexibility. He said that winning souls is the heartbeat of the church and the key to solving the church's problems.

On Sunday morning, General Conference Moderator Russell Gordon challenged the delegates with the question, "How much do you really love the lost?" He drove home the point that we must develop the heart of Christ in order to successfully fulfill our "Call to Declare."

In addition to some excellent worship and preaching, delegates enjoyed the hospitality of the Falls City congregation. The young people went to a nearby state park for horseback riding and other outdoor activities.

A highlight of the conference was the celebration of Holy Communion on Saturday evening. Leading the service were Rev. Mark Britton, Rev. Emery Hurd, host pastor Bill Shipman, Rev. Reilly Smith, and Rev. David Cooksey.

Conference business included election of new officers, disposition of the Carleton, Nebr., church property, discussion of the Western Brethren Round-Up planned for June 1995, budgets and reporting, discontinuation of the district newsletter, and receiving of reports from committees and auxiliaries.

Officers for 1995 are moderator Mark Britton, moderator-elect Emery Hurd, secretary Cindy Smith, treasurer Steve Medved, and assistant secretary/treasurer Carolyn Tucker. Next year's conference will be held June 9–11, 1995, at Mulvane, Kans., with "Being with God" (based on Philippians 3:8) as the theme.

— reported by Cindy Smith, district secretary

Thomas Sprowls to Pastor New Church To be Started this Fall in Medina, Ohio

Ashland, Ohio — Thomas E. Sprowls has been called to serve as pastor of the Home Mission church scheduled to begin this fall on the south side of the city of Medina, about 35 miles northeast of Ashland.

The new work at Medina will be a cooperative effort of the Ohio District Mission Board, the national Missionary Board of the Brethren Church, and Ashland Theological Seminary (through a course being taught at the seminary this fall on church planting by Dr. Dale Stoffer, with students in the class participating in the initial stages of the church-planting process).

Tom Sprowls (33) is a student at the seminary, where he has completed two of the three years required for a Master of Divinity Degree. He will complete his studies while working part time as pastor of the new congregation.

Tom is from Berlin, Pa., where he has been a member since an early age of the Berlin Brethren Church. He is a 1983 graduate of Indiana University of Pennsylvania, with a B.S. degree in applied mathematics. He served from 1983 to 1991 in the U.S. Army. He is a licensed minister in the Pennsylvania District.

He is married to the former Deborah Paul, also of Berlin, Pa. Like her husband, Debbie grew up in the Berlin Brethren Church. She is a graduate of Penn State University with a B.S. degree in accounting. She is currently employed at United Way of Ashland County.

Since the fall of 1993 a steering committee has been working with Dr. Stoffer laying the groundwork for the new congregation in Medina. Sprowls has been a member of that committee.



Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Sprowls

Tentative plans call for the new congregation to start in November. Brethren from area churches who volunteer to help plant this new church will begin meeting in late summer or early fall. In addition, an attempt will be made to begin home Bible studies in Medina prior to the first worship service in November.

Lord, when we are wrong, make us willing to change. And when we are right, make us easy to live with.

— Peter Marshall

In Memory

Goldie Waldenville, 80, June 15. Faithful member and attender of the Pleasant View Brethren Church. Services by Pastor R. Keith Hensley.

Thelma Stettler, 85, June 10. Member for 73 years of the Elkhart First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Timothy P. Garner.

Grace Denlinger, 92, June 2. Member of The Brethren Church of New Lebanon. Services by Pastor James F. Black.

Ralph ("Bill") Price, 77, May 26. Longtime member of the Vinco Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Jim Tomb.

Bess Titch, 93, May 13. Member since 1931 of the Goshen First Brethren Church, where she served as a deaconess for many years and was active in the W.M.S. and the church sewing group. Services by Pastor Donald Rowser.

Virginia Carnell, 86, March 16. Member of the Raystown Brethren Church. Services by Melvin Van Orman.

Goldenaires

Dorothy and Howard Nelson, 60th, August 12. Members of the Lanark First Brethren Church.

Woodrow and Marie Robertson, 55th, July 14. Mr. Robertson a member of the St. James Brethren Church.

George and Wilma Bunn, 65th, July 9. Members of the Waterloo Hammond Avenue Brethren Church.

Carl ("Tom") and Margaret Emswiller, 60th, June 10. Members of the Maurertown Brethren Church.

Membership Growth

Vinco: 7 by baptism

Raystown: 1 by baptism

St. James: 2 by baptism, 13 by transfer

Park Street: 11 by baptism, 7 by transfer

World Relief Helps Sow Seeds of Peace in Croatia

Wheaton, Ill. — The "Conference for Spiritual Renewal: A Time for Peace and Hope" held in Bizovac, Croatia, brought a unified vision among evangelicals for ministry in post-war Croatia, reports Art Gay, president of World Relief of the National Association of Evangelicals.

More than 150 representatives from all of the evangelical denominations in Croatia came from different parts of the country for the May 24–28 conference, sponsored by World Relief and Croatia's Protestant Evangelical Council.

"It was a deeply spiritual time as decision-makers grappled with issues of unity and healing within their own churches and communities," Gay said.

As evangelicals came together from diverse backgrounds, they were able to "work, weep, pray, plan, forgive, and understand each other and reconcile," according to Jill Briscoe, World Relief's vice chairman of the board. Mrs. Briscoe lead the women's ministry interest track of the conference. At least one-third of the conference participants were women.

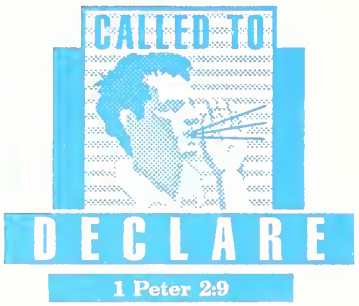
"We believe this is a turning point in Croatia," one participant said. "For some years, we have not been able to meet like this. There are very few things we disagree about and many things we can do together."



***Goshen, Ind.** — Pat Wogoman was honored on Sunday, May 22, by the Goshen First Brethren Church. The occasion was the retirement of Mrs. Wogoman after 22 years as church secretary. The Goshen Brethren held a cake and punch reception for Mrs. Wogoman following the morning worship service to express their appreciation for her many years of service to the congregation.*

— report and photo by Anna Bollinger

106th General Conference



August 8–12

Ashland, Ohio

Theme: "Called to Declare"

Theme Verse: 1 Peter 2:9

Called to declare what? "The praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light." And called to declare that "once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy." And called to declare that mercy and love and salvation to a world full of people who need to come to saving faith in Jesus Christ.

We have embarked on a three year process to strengthen our ability and our resolve to be witnesses to the world. This conference will provide another opportunity to become equipped for that purpose.



Thomas L. Youngblood

The 1994 Conference will feature:

- Thomas L. Youngblood as guest speaker and leader of a day-long seminar entitled "Love Your Neighbor to Life."
- Rich times of worship and fellowship
- Addresses by Moderator Russell Gordon and Moderator-Elect Reilly Smith
- A concert of prayer led by the Seminary
- A celebration of Brethren missions
- A variety of luncheons and banquets
- Updates on denominational ministries
- Exciting business sessions

Don't miss this year's General Conference! Make plans now to attend, and complete the registration form on page 15 of the June EVANGELIST *no later than* ***July 21.***

See you in August!

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THE BRETHREN
Evangelist
SEPTEMBER 1994



"The Tree of Life" at General Conference

See page 7.

Seeing God's Hand at Work

To Everything There is a Season

By Diane Stout

AS THE SEASONS CHANGE, so have our lives, as God has brought us through many trials.

On August 12, 1992, our 12-year-old daughter Suzanne, who was diagnosed as having a rare tumor in her hip socket, underwent major hip surgery. Our prayers were answered when the surgeons found only extra bone growth, which they removed. Later, they performed a second surgery in which they did major hip reconstruction. For Suzanne, this was followed by weeks in a wheelchair, on crutches, and in physical therapy.

Then one bitterly cold and windy morning in March, we lost our barn and milk parlor in a ferocious fire. The efforts of the firemen to combat the raging flames were halted by frozen water lines and a fierce, driving wind. We watched, devastated, as pieces of history crumbled to the ground on our family farm. Our faith in God saw us through this devastating tragedy, for we know that to everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.

Then on August 7, 1993, my husband Gayle lost part of his leg in a tragic farm accident. In the blink of an eye, his boot was caught by a power takeoff shaft, which ripped his leg apart. He was life-flighted to Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis, where his leg was amputated below the knee. Additional surgeries followed to clean and repair the leg. His was an unusual case, which required that a muscle flap (skin, muscle, and vein) be taken from his back to fill in around his knee in order to save it. Doctors said his was only the third case of its kind. Now, a year later, after battles with infection and phantom pain, numerous doctors' appointments, and several temporary prostheses, we are still looking forward to the day when Gayle will be fitted for his permanent leg and be able to "run and not grow weary."

As we dealt with this situation, trying to get ourselves back to normal, life took another U-turn, when hot cooking oil exploded into flames and burned my hand, which became totally covered with blisters from the second-degree burns. Since I am a musician for the Lord, my hands are especially precious to me. The human nature within me wanted to ask, "Why me, Lord?" But as a child of God and having faith in His power and grace, I know He has a purpose.

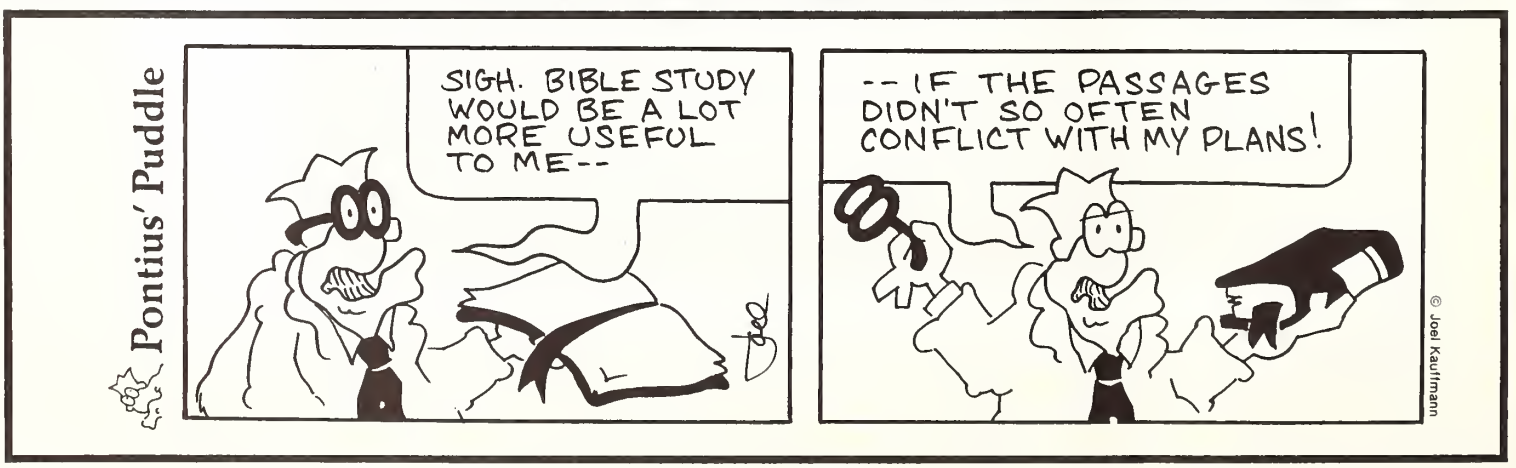
Through it all, we know that God has been with us all the time. He has laid His healing hand upon each situation and upon each of us. He is healing each of us according to His plan. As we share with others around us and minister to others who are suffering, we pray that God is being glorified.

The people from our church and community have supported us through it all. During Gayle's four-week hospital stay, he received more than 350 cards. We were overwhelmed by cards from people we didn't even know, in addition to those from family and friends. Hospital personnel stopped and gazed in awe at the cards lining the hospital room walls. We felt the prayers and the encouragement of our entire community.

We don't know what the future holds, but we are praying that God can use us for a special ministry. When life seems dark, we always remember Isaiah 40:31 and Isaiah 43. We know God is with us at every crossroad, guiding us when we cannot see and filling us with strength, hope, and courage for tomorrow.

As we face each new day and each new obstacle, we place our trust in Jesus Christ. Just as the farmer knows there is a time and a season to plant and a time to harvest, we likewise know that to every time and season there is a purpose. We just have to trust in the Lord and wait upon Him. He will give us new strength and enable us to mount up with wings like eagles. [⇧]

Diane and Gayle Stout are members of the Burlington, Ind., First Brethren Church. They have four children.



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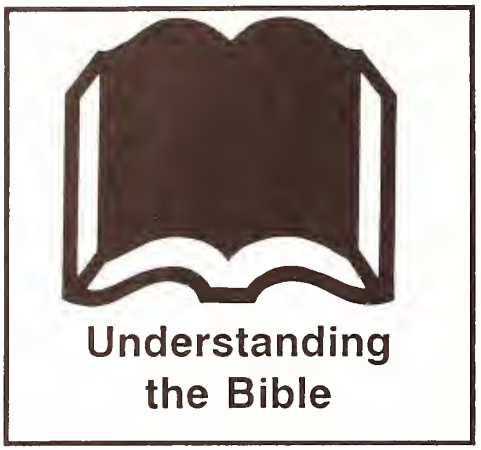
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by Sandi Rowsey

The September–October *Woman's Outlook Newsletter* is in the center of this issue.

Answers to the Little Crusader page:

You should have a 3 before the first sentence, a 1 before the second sentence, a 4 before the third sentence, and a 2 before the last sentence.

The word is "**faith.**" It means "Trusting Jesus to take care of us," or similar words.



Understanding the Bible

The Sermon on the Mount

By William H. Kerner

What is This Sermon?

ONE of the best-known facts about Jesus Christ is that He taught the Sermon on the Mount. This is the title commonly given to the teachings of Jesus found in chapters five through seven of the Gospel of Matthew.

The church has understood this Sermon in many different ways. Some have thought that it presents an impossible ideal. Others have believed that it shows us our inability to meet God's standards. Still others have said that it is intended for the Jews in a future millennial kingdom and is not directed to the church. For Brethren, the Sermon is a map of the character and behavior required of all believers. Its principles are valid for all times.

The Sermon on the Mount has been called "the original draft of essential Christianity." It is certainly not "good news" to anyone who depends on fulfilling its demands in order to enter into God's kingdom. This Sermon, however, is not a proclamation addressed to the public, but teaching addressed to the disciples of Christ (Matt. 5:1, 2).

The Sermon is a description of the quality of ethical life expected of those who have already entered the kingdom of God. It is intended for those who have turned their backs on paganism for the new life in Jesus Christ. It teaches us what our behavior is to be as God's people and the radical change of lifestyle that is required of us.

For the church, the Sermon is a basic reference for instructing new converts on just what it means to live the "new life" in Christ. It reminds them that conversion, first of all, means submission to the lordship of Jesus Christ. Further, it impresses on their minds a new value system—the value system of God's kingdom—which is radically different from the value system of the world.

What Does This Sermon Say?

The Sermon has a unity that comes from its logical development of a basic theme: the quality and conduct of life in the kingdom of God. A brief analysis of the Sermon follows.

Christian character (5:3–12).

In the Beatitudes, the word "blessed" is an objective judgment about certain people based on their character. It is God's congratulations to them for a task well done.

These eight beatitudes are the foundation of the Christian life. The first, *spiritual poverty* (v. 3), is basic to all the rest. Those who feel spiritual poverty are destitute of soul. They know their lives are mortgaged to the hilt and that they have no collateral. They recognize that they are helpless without the grace of God. (Read the hymn "Rock of Ages.") Christ calls these persons blessed: Theirs *is* the kingdom of heaven.

The remaining beatitudes complete the picture of Christian character. *Those who mourn* (v. 4) refers to the sorrow of repentance. These people mourn not just for their own sin, but also for those whom they know are living in sin. They also have a great sorrow for the lost.

The meek (v. 5). Rather than spinelessness, meekness is the opposite of pride. This humility is a quality the world does not appreciate, but it enables believers to know themselves.

To *hunger for righteousness* (v. 6) means to have a spiritual hunger for the character and conduct that please God. Being *merciful* (v. 7) requires that believers recognize Christ's mercy to them and that they extend His compassion to all people. Being *pure in heart* (v. 8) means having an honesty of heart, having no hidden motive or self-interest.

Jesus' words about *peacemakers* (v. 9) show that believers are called to extend to others the peace they themselves have found in Christ. These words also show that there must be peace with God before there can be peace with others. Peace with all humankind therefore requires a missionary thrust.

Those persecuted because of righteousness (vv. 10, 11). Righteousness is not a quality people naturally seek; therefore, godly living will bring strong rejection from the unbelieving world. This kind of rejection will continue until Jesus comes again.

Christian influence (5:13–16)

The Christian is to be influential in two ways, by being salt and by being light.

Being salt (v. 13). Salt is for preserving. In a world rotting and going bad (cf. Romans 1:18–32), only salt introduced from outside can arrest the decay (the moral rottenness of our day). Believers are, by their lifestyle, the preservative of all that is godly in an ungodly world. Only the redeemed, who know God's standards for life and who have the power of God's Spirit, can do this.

Rev. Kerner is a retired Brethren pastor and formerly served as Director of Pastoral Ministries for The Brethren Church. He is a member of The Brethren Church's Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication, which is preparing this series of articles.

"The basic difference between the believer and the world is at this point, which is the basic theme of the entire Sermon on the Mount—that God calls Christians to be different because they belong to Christ."

Being light (vv. 14, 15). Believers are to be light to a dark and fallen world through the character of their lives. The Apostle John relates, "In him was life, and that life was the light of men" (Jn. 1:4). That light cannot be hidden without denying the truth of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Christians are not called to withdraw from the world, for Jesus never advocated monasticism. Instead, Christians are to have a beneficial effect on society.

It is of interest that the main verbs in verses 13 and 14 are in the indicative. Jesus does not *command* His disciples to be salt and light. If people are the kind Jesus described in the Beatitudes, they *will* be salt and light to a sinful world. In fact, they are the only salt and light the world has. The basic difference between the believer and the world is at this point, which is the basic theme of the entire Sermon on the Mount—that God calls Christians to be different because they belong to Christ.

Being right with God (5:17–26)

The nature of righteousness (vv. 17–20). The Law is permanent. God's word is absolute to the end of the age. Jesus "fulfilled" (carried out) the Law. Christians, by the power of the Holy Spirit, must obey the Law and teach it (vv. 19, 20)—not in order to get right with God, but out of love and gratitude for God's grace. Righteousness is the key to the Sermon.

A lesson in righteousness (vv. 21–26). Anger without just cause is sin. So is abusive language. Both are attitudes of a heart not right with God.

Marriage relationships (5:27–32)

Adultery (vv. 27–30) means sex outside of marriage. Since righteousness of the heart is important (v. 28), and lust is a strong desire, adultery can be committed with the mind. This behavior is to be avoided at all costs (vv. 29, 30).

Divorce (vv. 31, 32). Jesus gives clear answers to this man-made difficulty. The certificate of divorce refers back to Deuteronomy 24:1–4. Marriage is permanent, and nothing dissolves it except adultery, which breaks the marriage bond (v. 32). Jesus gives the fuller reason in Matthew 19:5.

Three persistent problems (5:33–48)

Dishonesty (vv. 33–37). Honest people don't need oaths (v. 37). People's word should be as good as their bond. (Brethren were known for this trait.) Anything else is a result of sin.

Hate (vv. 38–42). Christians reject retaliation and returning evil for evil. They are to go beyond what is usual behavior, abandoning self-interest and pride. Verses 33–42 are the basis for the Brethren practice of nonswearing and nonresistance.

Vengeance (vv. 43–48). This is God's Law distorted (v. 43). Bitterness, hostility, and coldness are a denial of our Christian character. Love, even for enemies, is concern in action (v. 48).

Acts of faith (6:1–8, 16–18)

Helping others (vv. 1–4). The wrong way to help others is to make a show of good works or acts of piety (v. 1). Christians do not announce what they are doing with a dollar in one hand and a trumpet in the other (v. 2). The right way is to do it, forget it, and be satisfied with God as a witness (vv. 3, 4).

Prayer (vv. 5–8). The wrong way to pray is in order to make an impression, exhibiting an eloquence that comes from pride (v. 5). To pray with empty repetition or without thought is babbling (vv. 7, 8). The right way is to pray in a quiet, private place, seeking the presence of God (v. 6).

Fasting (vv. 16–18). The wrong way to fast is for the Christian to look dismal and sad so that others know he or she is fasting (v. 16). The right way is to clean up and present one's usual appearance (vv. 17, 18).

The pattern for prayer (6:9–15)

The name of God (v. 9). Only faith in Christ makes one a child of God who is entitled to call God Father. His name is to be held holy, the name above all names (see Philippians 2:5–15). Christians are to come before God with appropriate humility, devotion, and confidence.

The rule of God (v. 10). This is a request for God to reign in the believer's life, and ultimately, through Christ, over the entire world.

The will of God (v. 10b). This is a request for the will of God, already being done in heaven, to be done in the believer's life, then everywhere on earth (see Romans 12:2).

Provisions from God (v. 11). This reminds Christians of their ultimate dependence on God. It is a request for the necessities (rather than the luxuries) of life to be granted each day.

Forgiveness from God (v. 12). This is a reminder of our debt to God, which cannot be paid except through Jesus Christ. As believers ask for forgiveness, they will have already forgiven those who have wronged them (vv. 14, 15). Forgiveness of others is evidence that forgiveness from God has been received (Matthew 18:23–35).

Guidance from God (v. 13). Christians ask God to take charge of them and to rescue them from evil temptations. They ask for the strength and endurance necessary

Correspondence Welcomed

The members of the General Conference Executive Council's Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication invite readers to suggest topics or Bible passages to discuss in future articles in this column. Send questions, comments, or suggestions to the committee in care of The Brethren Evangelist, 524 College Ave., Ashland, OH 44805.

for godly living (see 2 Timothy 4:18).

A look at tomorrow (6:19–34)

Our treasure (vv. 19–24). Possessions are only temporary; therefore it is foolish to build up treasure for oneself (v. 19). Christians build up durable treasure in heaven (v. 20). God lets them choose where to invest (v. 21), and those choices involve spiritual danger (vv. 22, 23). Their decisions affect their relationship with God (v. 24).

Our anxiety (vv. 25–34). Jesus called Christians to think; now He calls them to act (v. 25). Anxiety only hinders them (vv. 26–31). But seeking first the Kingdom of God brings freedom from anxieties in serving Him (vv. 32–34).

When things go wrong (7:1–12)

Sound judgment (vv. 1–5). This is not a command to suspend judgment about others (v. 1), but a command to sift right from wrong carefully (v. 2; compare John 7:24). This same standard applies to self (vv. 3–5).

Careful thinking (v. 6). Some people are not grateful for help or correction. Christians should use discernment and weigh their words and actions.

Persistent prayer and action (vv. 7–12). The Christian is to persistently ask, seek, and knock (vv. 7, 8), as illustrated in verses 9 and 10. God gives according to His will (v. 11), as Christians act according to His way (v. 12).

The great choice (7:13–28)

The road we walk (vv. 13, 14). Each person enters individually the gate of his or her choice. (Compare Deuteronomy 30:15.)

The teachers we believe (vv. 15–20). This is a challenge to think out and define truth (v. 15). Verses 16–20 give illustrations.

The life we live (vv. 21–23). We cannot call Jesus "Lord" and not follow His teachings.

The foundation we build (vv. 24–27). Our life is built day by day on the foundation of our choice (see 1 John 3:10). The purpose of the Sermon on the Mount is to bring us to this point of choice.

The Significance of This Sermon

Brethren have tended to go to the Sermon on the Mount rather than to the New Testament letters for their ethical instruction. It is significant, however, that there is no teaching in the Sermon on the Mount that is not also found in the letters. One can see this by making a list of the teachings in this Sermon and then reading the letters to find the same teachings there.

This brief analysis shows the practical significance of the Sermon for all believers. It also gives us an understanding of the meaning of repentance, the new birth, and love.

Although Brethren have no creed, they believe that this Sermon sets forth the radical requirements for living as a follower of Jesus Christ. Its significance for our day is expressed well by John R. W. Stott:

> I believe that the Sermon on the Mount is to be obeyed. Indeed if the church realistically accepted his standards and values as here set forth, and lived by them, it would be the alternative society he always intended it to be, and would offer to the world an authentic Christian counter-culture.*

For Brethren, the Sermon on the Mount is the pattern of that nonconformity they have tried to practice (Romans 12:1–2). As they follow the teachings of this sermon, Brethren have much to offer a fallen world. [✝]

**Christian Counter-Culture: The Message of the Sermon on the Mount* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1978), p. 10.

Another New Translation!

I RECEIVED a news release recently about a new translation of the Bible soon to be published. My reaction is similar to that of a character in a television commercial of a number of year's ago who exclaimed, "Another freeze-dried coffee!" And so I respond, "Another new translation!"

I am old enough to remember when the only English version of the Bible most American Christians knew was the King James Version. I don't want to go back to those days. I am thankful for many of the new translations that have been published in the last 40 or so years. They have put the message of the Bible into the language of our day, which is different from the language of the King James Version. They have also incorporated new insights that have been gained on the meaning of the original texts. But how many new translations do we need?

I sometimes wonder about the motivation for still more versions. Are the publishers producing them in order to help people better understand the Bible? Or are they interested in getting a share of the large Bible market? And do people buy these translations because they have difficulty understanding the version they already own? Or do they buy them because they are new?

A few days after receiving the news release about the new translation of the Bible, I came across a statement I received a few years ago that came out of a conference of agencies involved in translating the Bible into the languages of the world. The statement included the following observations:

- While some Scriptures now exist in more than 2,000 languages, and Bible translation projects are currently in progress in about 1,600 languages, nevertheless there still remain hundreds of millions of people, speaking more than 3,000 languages, who have no Scripture whatsoever available to them in their mother tongue.
- While Christians in developed countries possess Scriptures in many versions and formats, and seldom take time to reflect on how priceless this heritage is, many Christians around the world have never had the word of God in their own language.
- While the task of making the Scriptures available to people in these languages is enormous, it is also clear that if God's people unite their efforts and combine their resources in approaching the challenge, the goal is achievable.

In light of these observations, rather than buying yet another new translation of the Bible, perhaps we should give that money instead to an agency that is helping to make the Bible available to people who have never had the word of God in their own language.

— *Richard C. Winfield, editor*

General Conference Report

Highlights of the 106th General Conference of The Brethren Church

Held August 8–12, 1994, in Ashland, Ohio

ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES are highlights of the 106th General Conference of The Brethren Church. This Conference report begins with the moderator's address, presented Monday evening, and works its way through Conference week, with reports of the main Conferences events from Tuesday through Friday. Then follows a summary of Conference business and a brief overview of the Brethren Youth In Christ Convention, which ran concurrently with Conference. It concludes with sketches of the sessions of the National Association of Brethren Church Elders and the Brethren Men of Mission. A report of the Woman's Missionary Society sessions is included in the *Woman's Outlook Newsletter*, found in the center of this issue.

As I prepared this report this year, I was at somewhat of a disadvantage, since I was unable to attend this Conference and, therefore, had no first-hand knowledge of what took place. During Conference week, I was completing a term of special service in China, then traveling from China to the U.S. (More about this in next month's issue.)

Because I was not at this Conference, I had to rely on others to be my eyes and ears. Therefore, I am especially grateful to Matt Hamel, Brenda Colijn, Jerry Flora, Fred Miller, Ron Waters, and Deb Ritchey for writing the reports you will find on the following pages.

Photographer for the week was Ryan Gordon of Pleasant Hill, Ohio, son of Moderator Russ Gordon. Unfortunately, Ryan experienced every photographer's nightmare, a malfunctioning camera. As a result, many of his pictures were unusable. Happily, Dr. Jim Hollinger of Goshen, Ind., was also taking pictures, and we were able to use some of his photographs. Even so, suitable pictures of some speakers and events were not available.

I hope that you will find this report of General Conference both interesting and informative.

— Richard C. Winfield, editor



Photo here and on the cover by Dr. Jim Hollinger

"The Tree of Life"

CONFERENCE DELEGATES who arrived in Ashland at the beginning of the week were surprised to find a replica of a barren, dead tree standing on the speakers' platform on Monday evening and all day Tuesday. But for the rest of the week, the tree was anything but barren!

Evangelism & Church Growth Commission Chair Cindy Smith introduced "The Tree of Life" Tuesday evening. "Right now it appears lifeless," she said. "But even when the starkness of bare branches suggests dormancy and death, within the skeleton of the tree lies the potential for a burst of new life."

A table with paper leaves on it stood at the front of the auditorium all week. Mrs. Smith invited delegates to record on the leaves names of persons who had become new believers and/or new members of their churches during the past Conference year. Members of the commission hung the leaves on the tree throughout the week. Periodically, Conference speakers commented on the new life evident in the tree and the new lives in Christ it represented.

By Friday, more than 530 leaves adorned the tree. New Moderator Reilly Smith invited delegates to take a leaf home and to pray daily for the person whose name was recorded on it.

The concept for "The Tree of Life" originated with The Andrew Center, an evangelism and congregational revitalization resourcing center. The tree was constructed by Park Street member Steve Huber. Leaves were prepared by members of the Newark, Park Street, and Winding Waters churches.

— Ronald W. Waters



Called to Declare

Moderator's Address to the 1994 General Conference

By Russell C. Gordon

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

1 Peter 2:9*

The value of one

IT WAS EARLY one morning and on the beach was an elderly man. He walked with a cane, carefully surveying the beach that the receding tide had left exposed. Every now and then he bent to pick up something and toss it into the ocean.

A stranger watched with fascination as the elderly man carefully scanned the beach before him. Finally the stranger realized that the man was looking for starfish. Every time he saw one lying helpless in the sand, unable to get back to the ocean on its own, the elderly man would lovingly pick it up and toss it gently back into the sea.

Curious as to why the man was doing this, the stranger approached him and asked the reason. The man answered, "The starfish are left behind after the tide goes out, and are unable to get back to the water by themselves. If they do not get back into the water, they will dry up and die beneath the hot summer sun."

To which the stranger replied, "But there are endless miles of beach and there must be millions of starfish. Surely you don't think you can save them all. What difference can your efforts possibly make?"

Slowly the old man bent over and picked up another starfish. As he tossed it into the ocean, he looked at the stranger and said, "It makes a difference *to that one.*"

When I first read this story, it caused me to think: How easy it is to become so discouraged by the sheer magnitude of the task that Christ has set before us that we fail to focus on the value of each person to Him! We are called to be faithful in scanning those "beaches" and in making a difference in the name of Christ to "that one and that one and that one and . . . ."

A wake-up call



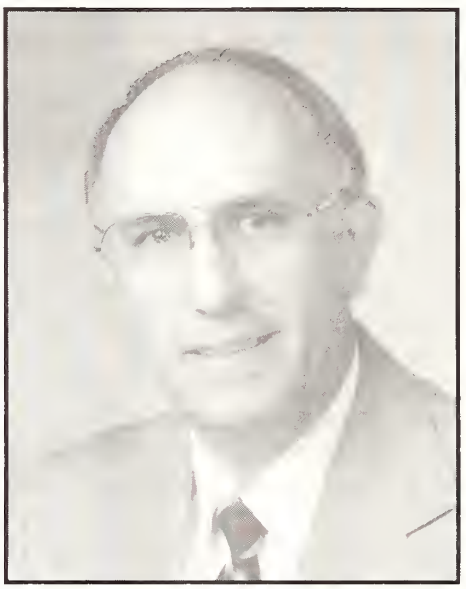
Brethren, that alarm that you just heard* was the same one that you heard at the end of Conference last year, and it symbolizes the same thing now as then: **a wake-up call!** It is **a wake-up call** to the realities of the world around us.

Last year at the close of Conference and at district conferences and in local churches throughout the year, I have been asking a question. The question is this: *What is 750,000 miles long, reaches around the world about 30 times, and grows at the rate of 20 miles each day?* It is the line of people who are without Christ.

Look with me again to our Conference theme verse, 1 Peter 2:9:

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may ***declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.***

God is very clear here and in many other passages as to what



Moderator Russell C. Gordon

He expects of us. There can be no avoiding of the issue:

We are a chosen people —
— a royal priesthood
— a holy nation
— a people belonging to God

for the purpose of telling others of the hope that we have in Jesus Christ.

For thousands of years one of the views held by the Jews concerning the coming of the Messiah has been that of a knight on a white horse who would come charging down the street and kill all of their foes and set the chosen people upon the throne of the world. The third Psalm (in verse 7) puts it this way:

Arise, O LORD!
Deliver me, O my God!
For you have struck all my enemies on the jaw;
you have broken the teeth of the wicked.

Jesus did not come that way—He did not, and does not, fit the expectations of many—but He IS the Messiah nevertheless. Instead of coming as a knight on a white

*Unless otherwise noted, quotations from the Bible are from the *New International Version.*

*At this point in the address, the alarm went off on a clock that the moderator had placed in the lectern.

*"In the reality of today's world, we are called not just to watch or to experience for ourselves, but to pass on Jesus' touch. We are not just to **like** Jesus, but to **be like** Jesus!"*

horse, He came as a quiet and humble lover of people.

John the Baptist was one of those confused by the way Jesus came, and from prison sent this question to Jesus: "Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?" (Matt. 11:2).

John's question is the same one that the world is asking today, born of the same frustration—that Christ and His church don't seem to forcibly bring justice into the world,

don't right a lot of wrongs,
don't feed all the hungry,
don't heal all the sick,
don't stop all wars,
don't even produce a community of especially good people.

We live in a world that IS NOT getting better but rather worse. **We live in a nation:**

- Where abortion is the second most frequent medical "procedure" after circumcision.
- Where violent crime has increased 500 percent since 1960.
- Where births to unwed mothers have increased 400 percent since 1960.
- Where 50 percent of our nation's children will spend a significant portion of their childhood living apart from their fathers.
- Where the amount of money wagered legally has grown to an estimated $330 *billion* in 1992, an increase of 162 percent in 10 years.
- Where 26 percent of sixth to eighth graders say that they have had sex.

And the list could go on.

I believe that people are still asking the same question that John asked: **"Is Jesus the one, or should we look for another?"**

Jesus' answer to John, **and to the world today**, is:

> *Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.* *Matt. 11:4–5*

It was as if He were saying, "My style—God's style—is not a violent revolution, but a firm and gentle touch on the hearts of people."

In John's day and today, people want to know more about the One who so often

brought health to the sick,
strength to the weak,
direction to the lost,
and light to the darkness of the soul.

Called to imitate Jesus

We as Christians are called to imitate Jesus' style. It is not easy, and we should not mislead ourselves into thinking that it is. The style of Jesus is radically different from that which we or the world expects. Our style is more customarily that of the writer of Psalm 3:7, who says:

> *Arise, O LORD!*
> *Deliver me, O my God!*
> *For you have struck all my enemies on the jaw;*
> *you have broken the teeth of the wicked.*

But Jesus teaches us that this is not the way; that it is not the way we are to do things.

In 1921 Nikolai Lenin became sick and lost the power of speech and was forced to let others rule in his name. Some of the things that he wrote during that time are these remarkable words:

> I made a mistake. . . . Without doubt, an oppressed multitude had to be liberated. But our method only provoked further oppression and atrocious massacres. My living nightmare is to find myself lost in an ocean red with the blood of innumerable victims. It is too late now to alter the past, but what was needed to save Russia was ten Francis of Assisi's.

In the reality of today's world, we are called not just to watch or to experience for ourselves, but to pass on Jesus' touch. We are not just to ***like*** Jesus, but to ***be like*** Jesus! I believe that one of the reasons that we gather in church week after week, or come to conferences like this year after year, is not just to receive the Master's touch, but to renew our willingness and ability to touch the way the Master touched.

Mark 5:24–34 tells us the story of the woman who had a problem of bleeding for years and her realization that "If I can just touch his clothes, I will be made well." When she accomplished that feat, she **was** made well. This is one of a whole series of accounts of the effect of Jesus on the lives of people —

— people who were unsure of their worth,
— people who felt guilty about their lives,
— people who felt out of touch with others and out of touch with God,
— **people with all kinds of needs.**

Jesus touched people; sometimes He touched them with His hands; sometimes He touched them only with His eyes or the tone of His voice. This woman touched Jesus' clothes, but before the encounter was over, He touched her in a way that made it possible for her to know that she really existed and that **she really was a somebody.** That's the Good News, preached in word and deed to the poor of that day, and of our day. It is that touch of the Master upon a nation or a person that can bring total transformation to a situation or to a life.

And this is where we are to begin, you and I, if we are going to help God make a difference in the world. We must begin with offering ourselves for the touch of the Master on our lives. But that

"We cannot expect to get the job done that God has called us to do if we are not willing to invest a lot of ***hard work****. If the grass looks greener on the other side of the fence, you can well bet that someone worked to make it that way."*

requires humility, the expectation, the persistence, and the faith of that woman who sought Jesus in the crowd. "If I can just touch His clothes, I will be made well."

If we can shed the trappings of selfish, artificial, aggressive values, leave vengeance to the Lord, as the psalmist says, and open ourselves to the touch of Christ, we will become new creatures, and thus be fit and able to be of value to Him in reaching His world.

I do not remember the exact date, but sometime within the last two years I was visiting our Home Mission church in Frederick, Md., on a Sunday morning. During the message that morning Pastor Charlie Beekley led the congregation in a look at a passage of scripture that had never made an impression on me or spoken to me in any way before, but which is one that I now reread often. The passage is 1 Chronicles 4:9–10:

> *Jabez was more honorable than his brothers. His mother had named him Jabez, saying, ". . . because I gave birth to him in pain." Jabez cried out to the God of Israel, "Oh that you would bless me and enlarge my territory! Let your hand be with me, and keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain." And God granted his request.*

Jabez was evidently a man who could not be satisfied with less than God's best. Some people are content to plod on year after year accomplishing little or nothing. But not Jabez! He wanted to have all that it was possible for him to have. No spiritual ruts for him! He insisted on doing more in life than just marking time. He asked God to **enlarge his territory.** *And God granted his request.*

Caleb was a man like Jabez. Forty years after he and Joshua had issued their "minority" report, as the Israelites finally prepared to possess the Promised Land, Caleb, now 85, asked for the toughest part of the land to conquer. He wanted to engage the giants of the land in battle, the very warriors who had frightened his fellow spies so badly 40 years earlier. As he stood before the mountain that was the stronghold of the most powerful fighting men in Canaan, he cried, "Now give me this hill country that the LORD promised me that day" (Josh. 14:12).

David is another example of a person who wanted God's best. He had been anointed king over Israel, but Saul was still on the throne. There seemed to be little hope that this young shepherd would ever be able to become king and assume his God-appointed duties. The establishment was against him and had the manpower and the weapons.

David's followers were described as "All those who were in distress or in debt or discontented gathered around him, and he became their leader. About four hundred men were with him" (1 Sam. 22:2). The military prospects for David and his men were not good. Yet God made a mighty army out of them, and David finally became king. He became king, at least in part, because he would settle for nothing less than God's best.

Empowered to be Winners

We also do not have to settle for less than God's best. *Please take note*: I am not talking about the health and wealth gospel that so many are caught up in today. I am talking about being all that God wants us to be and doing all that God wants us to do! Greater spiritual victories await us than we have known in the past. We do not have to live in defeat. We should not expect to be losers as individuals, as churches, or as a denomination, because we have been equipped and empowered by God to be **winners!**

We can enlarge our territory, increase our outreach. We can see greater numbers respond to the message of love that our Lord has given us to share with the world. *God will make it possible.* **BUT** we must cooperate with Him.

In order to declare the message of salvation, we need a clear VISION. By that I mean that we need to believe that God is going to do great things through us. Solomon wrote: "Where there is no vision, the people perish . . ." (Prov. 29:18, *KJV*).

If we are to declare the message of salvation, we must join FAITH to vision. A.W. Tozer, in his book *Paths to Power,* talks about dynamic life and static life. He sees the *dynamic periods* as those times when believers have gone forward in faith, fearlessly carrying God's message to the world. During these times, he says, these faithful people have exchanged the safety of inaction for the hazards of God-inspired progress. And he points out that God's power has always followed this kind of courage.

The *static periods,* on the other hand, have been those times when God's people have been afraid to advance or have become weary of the struggle and have settled down to conserve their gains.

We must also remember that **to declare the message of salvation will require WORK.** Nothing works unless we work. Vision without faith and work makes you a visionary, dreaming great dreams but never seeing them come to reality. As James wrote, ". . . faith by itself . . . is dead" (James 2:17).

We cannot expect to get the job done that God has called us to do if we are not willing to invest a lot

of **hard work**. If the grass looks greener on the other side of the fence, you can well bet that someone worked to make it that way.

I would like to conclude with a couple of stories:

An elderly man was found dead one morning in his home. He had scarcely a comfort or a luxury, but stored in his attic were 246 valuable violins! The very best of the collection, fashioned by a master craftsman, was hidden in the bottom drawer of a rickety old chest. It was an exquisite 147-year-old Stradivarius! Obviously the man cherished the instruments greatly, but his love for them withheld from the world the beautiful music they might have produced.

Another man once laid a piece of chocolate candy on a table. Then, picking up an ant, he put it near the delicious bon-bon. He was surprised to see the ant take a single bite and then hurry off, leaving the rest untouched. Soon the little creature returned, followed by a long train of other ants who enjoyed the treat with him.

It is no longer the practice for the moderator to make recommendations at the end of the moderator's address. And I think I like it that way. Most of the recommendations got lost in the shuffle anyway. However, just a closing thought or two as a result of my experiences over the last year.

I really believe that all too often we Brethren have been like the old man and his violins. We have hidden the treasure that has been given to us in the bottom drawer of our rickety old lives. We seemed to have had the attitude that what is ours is ours, and no one else is going to get it.

At the very least, we have allowed ourselves to be sidetracked by issues that really will never have an effect on how many people we are able to introduce to the Lord Jesus Christ. Every time that happens, the devil wins another battle in the war. It is about time that we make up our minds that we are not going to let the devil do that anymore.

Let's learn a lesson from the ant and not keep the Good News a secret. But once we have tasted and seen that it is good, let's go out and bring others in to share the joy and hope that we have in Jesus Christ. Having found God's rich supply of grace, let's spread the glad tidings to others. I do not mean to imply that we have done nothing, but rather that we surely have not done all that we could.

Think about these words from the song entitled "The Mission."*

The message we're proclaiming
is repentance and forgiveness,
The Author of Salvation to the
dying race of man.
To love the Lord our God is the
heartbeat of our mission,
The spring from which our service over-flows.
Across the street or around the
world the mission's still the
same,
Proclaim and live the truth in
Jesus' name.

That's what it is all about, **proclaiming the truth in Jesus' name.**

*But **you** are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, **that you may declare** the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.*

1 Peter 2:9 [†]

*This song was sung by Rev. Marlin McCann prior to the moderator's address.

General Conference Report

Brethren Hear About, Respond to Human Need at World Relief Luncheon

THE MISSION of the church consists of three facets, noted Dr. Arthur Gay, president of World Relief Corporation of the National Association of Evangelicals, at this year's World Relief Luncheon, held Tuesday noon of Conference week.

The three-fold calling of the church includes evangelism, discipleship, and our biblical mandate to "do works of mercy, love, and justice." In doing the third task, World Relief acts as an extension of the local church around the world.

Quoting Philippians 4:4–9 as his text, Dr. Gay emphasized that in a year of terrible tragedies in Rwanda and Eastern Europe, true peace comes from putting our trust in God and keeping our commitment to His will for us on earth. He noted that World Relief extends across denominations to give compassionate assistance wherever needed.

In Cuba, the agency is assisting Haitian refugees with counseling and training toward their eventual safe re-entry into their homeland. In Rwanda, ministry is being extended into the country from neighboring Zaire, working through an existing network of churches to meet the needs of more than one million refugees. Through the leaders of the existing evangelical churches, the harvest of crops has begun, and resettlement appears a viable option with the assistance of World Relief and other organizations.

While enjoying a good, simple meal of soup, bread, and fruit, those attending the World Relief Luncheon took part in an "Idea Fest," during which they shared ways to increase awareness of and to raise money for world hunger. Suggestions ranged from lock-ins to bake sales. Whatever method is used, those at the luncheon agreed that if the effort is made to inform them, Brethren will respond to those around the world who are in need.*

— reported by Matthew Hamel

*Evidence of this was forthcoming at the luncheon itself. Having been informed before Conference and also during the luncheon of World Relief's need for funds to minister to the refugees in Rwanda, Brethren responded with an offering at the luncheon of $3,000.00

General Conference Report

Tom Youngblood Encourages Brethren to "Love Your Neighbor to Life"

THOMAS L. YOUNGBLOOD, Director of U.S. Ministries for the International Bible Society, spoke about the importance of evangelism at this year's General Conference. During the Tuesday evening worship service, he encouraged Brethren to take advantage of their opportunities to share the gospel. Then on Wednesday, he conducted an all-conference workshop on evangelism entitled "Love Your Neighbor to Life."

The Tuesday evening message focused on 2 Corinthians 2:14–16. Mr. Youngblood emphasized that Christians are the fragrance of Christ wherever they go. He illustrated this through several stories of how he and others were able to share the gospel by seizing their opportunities. Using Scripture booklets produced by the International Bible Society, he showed how the gospel message can be expressed in ways that address different audiences and circumstances.

This encouragement to share the gospel reached a practical level in Wednesday's evangelism workshop. In the morning session, Mr. Youngblood attempted to take the fear out of evangelism by showing Conference participants that they have several gifts or skills that can build bridges to others in preparation for sharing the gospel.



Tom Youngblood during his Wednesday workshop. Photo by Dr. Jim Hollinger



Evangelism is a process

He emphasized that evangelism is not an event but a process. Because each person needs an average of twenty-five contacts before coming to Christ, Christians cannot accomplish this process alone. Believers are not responsible for bringing someone to Christ, merely for being one faithful witness in that person's life.

Mr. Youngblood presented a biblical basis for evangelism in Jesus' command to love our neighbors, after which he gave an overview of the evangelism process. He described evangelism as consisting of 5 P's. It requires **presence** (being salt and light in the world, caring for others); **proclamation** (presenting the good news of Christ); and **persuasion** (encouraging people to make a decision). The whole process must be surrounded by **prayer** and must be done in the **power** of the Holy Spirit. Mr. Youngblood encouraged participants to commit to taking some action in each of these areas.

In the afternoon session, Mr. Youngblood led participants through the process of writing their personal testimony and showed them how to move from that into a presentation of the gospel. Using Romans 6:23 and an illustration developed by Randy Raysbrook, he taught participants how to do "One Verse Evangelism," a simple gospel presentation that takes less than four minutes. The workshop concluded with a discussion of how to assimilate new people into the church.

Each participant received a booklet called *Love Your Neighbor to Life* containing "119 Ways To Use Scriptures In Evangelism," as well as appendices describing "One Verse Evangelism" and several other ways to present the gospel.

No one in your world should begin married life without a personal copy of God's Word. His and Hers hardcover NIV *Bibles make appropriately evangelistic wedding gifts—especially if you include a helpful leaflet like* Getting to Know Your New Bible.

One of the "119 Ways To Use Scriptures In Evangelism."

Mr. Youngblood summed up evangelism with a Golden Rule: Be the kind of friend to others that you would like to have; proclaim the gospel in a way that you would like to hear it proclaimed; and convince people in a way that you would like to be convinced.

— reported by Dr. Brenda B. Colijn

General Conference Report

Concert of Prayer Led by Ashland Theological Seminary

DR. FRED FINKS, president of Ashland Theological Seminary, welcomed the General Conference to the Wednesday evening service, a concert of prayer planned by the seminary. Following Dr. Finks' invocation, the program proceeded without comment as the congregation followed an order of service prepared to balance various kinds of prayer and worship. Dr. Ron Sprunger and his wife, Linda, led the music, assisted by members of the Ashland Seminary choir.

The period of preparation featured the Brethren hymn "Move in Our Midst" and a piano solo, "We Shall Behold Him," played by Mrs. Doris Shultz. The first major section of prayer was Praise and Adoration. The congregation sang "Great Is the Lord" and moved into prayer circles for the remainder of the evening. A men's ensemble presented "Sovereign Lord," followed by the choir anthem "To Worship You," based on Psalm 139.

In the section on Thanksgiving, members of the congregation joined in singing the contemporary song "Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart" and the classic hymn "Now Thank We All Our God," before praying together in their prayer circles. The hymns "Holy Lord" and "Create in Me a Clean Heart" led into a time of Confession, followed by words of assurance and pardon.

Consecration was the next area of prayer together, which combined such hymns as "Breathe on Me, Breath of God," "Lord, Be Glorified," and "Take My Life." This led naturally to a time of prayers for Mission, which concluded with the recent hymn "Song for the Nations."

A period of intercession for Leadership and Encouragement, together with the recent hymn "God Will Make a Way," concluded the concert of prayer.

Throughout the service, Scripture readings, responsive readings, and periods of prayer were led by Ashland Seminary students Tom Sprowls, Paul Sluss, Eric Bargerhuff, Kurt Stout, Matt Snell, Sherry Bowling, and James Pflugfelder. The experience recalled those present to the devotion that is the heart of Brethren faith and life.

—reported by Dr. Jerry Flora

Focus is on Missions During Thursday Evening Events

MISSIONS was the focus of Conference on Thursday evening. The evening began with a Missionary Board Banquet, which was followed by a worship service led by the Missionary Board.

Featured at the banquet were Brethren overseas missionaries who were in the U.S. and in attendance at Conference. Dr. K. Prasanth Kumar, director of the Brethren Mission in India, brought greetings on behalf of himself and his wife, Nirmala, and told briefly about the progress of Brethren mission work in India. Missionary Allen Baer, on furlough from his work in Argentina, South America, likewise brought greetings.

During the Missionary Board service that followed the banquet, the "Missions Spotlight" was turned on Rev. James Black, Executive Director of the Missionary Board. Dr. Arden Gilmer, president of the board, presented Rev. Black a plaque in appreciation for his 13 years of service to the Missionary Board, first as Director of Home Missions and then—since January 1985—as Executive Director of the Board. Rev. Black has announced his retirement as Executive Director, effective May 29, 1995.

Another special feature of this service was the commissioning of members of the STAKE (Saturation of the Target Area for Kingdom Extension) Home Missions Team. This team of tentmakers is now living and working in the Orlando, Fla., area, and intends to plant several Brethren congregations in that area over the course of the next several years.

The speaker for the evening service was Pastor Rickey Bolden, who serves the Southeast Christian Fellowship in Washington, D.C. (*see next page*).



Dr. Arden Gilmer (l.) presents a plague to Rev. James R. Black, Executive Director of the Missionary Board, in appreciation for his 13 years of service to the board. Rev. Black has announced his retirement as Executive Director effective May 29, 1995.

General Conference Report

Rickey Bolden Challenges Brethren To Get Excited About Jesus

RICKEY BOLDEN, pastor of the Southeast Christian Fellowship in Washington, D.C. (formerly the Washington Brethren Church), was the speaker on Thursday evening of Conference for the Missionary Board service.

Pastor Bolden used the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8 as a model for excitement in the lives of believers. He noted the fine education this man had received. In addition to his native tongue, he could read Hebrew and speak Greek. He was securely employed as the finance minister for the queen of Ethiopia. He was excited enough about his religion to travel hundreds of miles in a chariot to worship in Jerusalem. But he was lost.



Pastor Rickey Bolden

Philip, a disciple of Jesus Christ, radiated the kind of joy that attracts people to Christ. The Ethiopian eunuch invited Philip *up* into his chariot. The result was twofold: First, the eunuch humbled himself to Philip's level. You can't come to Jesus with a proud heart. Second, the eunuch "went on his way rejoicing." Paul instructs us to "Rejoice in the Lord always" (Phil. 4:4). The tragedy is that we have let Satan take away our joy by causing us to become more concerned about buildings, organs, and names (church names and affiliation) than about the souls of the lost. Is this the Brethren way?

Pastor Bolden went on to point out that to rejoice is to share your life. People can tell when they walk into your church whether you're excited about Jesus or if you're burned out.

Second, to rejoice is to obey Jesus. Eight people got excited about Jesus in 1708 and the result is thousands of Brethren today. It's not good enough to say, "We held our ground." That is an insult to those who are obeying the Great Commission. The world is waiting for another eight people to stand up for Jesus Christ.

Third, to rejoice is to break barriers. You begin to look at the hearts of people and not at the color of their skin or their physical condition.

Pastor Bolden closed with a story of Cecil, a young man deformed by cerebral palsy. Cecil's mother explained to Pastor Bolden how they had been put out of every church they had attended. When Cecil came to Southeast Christian Fellowship in his wheelchair that first Sunday, he stuttered out a greeting to the pastor. Then one Sunday Pastor Bolden noticed a disturbance during the worship service coming from Cecil's direction. Cecil was working his way toward the altar, where he got excited about Jesus. Now Cecil is pushing the wheelchairs of others whom he is helping to bring into the church. Is that the Brethren way? Amen!

— reported by Rev. Fred Miller



Commissioning of the STAKE Home Missions Team that intends to plant several churches in the Orlando, Fla., area was an exciting feature of the Missionary Board service at Conference. Those commissioned (*) and those helping with the commissioning were (l. to r.) Rev. David Stone, Annalee Hoover, Dawn Kidd*, Enid Schrader*, Robert Geddes*, Dr. Arden Gilmer, Denise* and Rev. Kerry* Scott (with their three children), Rev. Russell Gordon (back to camera), Rev. James Black, and Mark Ray*. Vanda Funkhouser, who also serves on the STAKE Team, was unable to be at Conference for the commissioning service.* **Photo by Dr. Jim Hollinger**

Conference Offerings

Evening offerings received throughout General Conference week were designated for various ministries.

Offerings Monday and Tuesday evenings were designated for evangelism ministries of the national office. The total offering for these two nights was $1,886.91.

Wednesday's offering of $1,154.53 will be used for Brethren student scholarships at the seminary. The $1,492.39 from Thursday's offering will support Brethren Home Missions. Total for the evening offerings was $4,533.83.

Tuesday's World Relief luncheon offering of $3,201.00 was designated for Rwanda relief.

National W.M.S. sponsored a quilt and crafts auction following the Missionary Board service. A total of $900 was raised for mission work in Lima, Peru.

The Woman's Outlook Newsletter

A publication of the Brethren Woman's Missionary Society

BRETHREN W.M.S. CHURCH

September–October 1994 Volume 8, Number 1

CALLED TO DECLARE

Devotions given by Polly Benshoff, WMS Conference, August 9, 1994

Chosen from I Peter 2:9, we read the following declaration: *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*

In the dispensation of grace, all believers are unconditionally constituted a "kingdom of priests." The chief privilege of a priest is access to God. Under law, only the high priest could enter the "holy of holies" and could do that only once a year. But when Christ died, the veil, the type of Christ's human body (Heb. 10:20) was rent (torn, opened) so that now the believer priests, equally with Christ the High Priest, have access to God in the holiest (Heb. 10:19–22). The High Priest is corporally there, as stated in Hebrews.

In the New Testament, the believer priest is the one who offers a three-fold sacrifice: (1) his living body; (2) praise to God, which is the fruit of the lips that are giving thanks to God's name (to be offered continually); and (3) his substance—doing good, sharing what you have with others (Heb. 13:16). The New Testament priest is also an intercessor. First Timothy 2:1—*I exhort therefore, that, first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men:* (yes, even for kings and all that are in authority). Why? So that *we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty* (v. 2). *Nothing* should keep us from the throne of grace. Like Epaphras, we should give ourselves wholly to the priestly work of intercession, so that those for whom we pray *may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God* (Col. 4:12).

My, how circumstances, family crises, social problems, church disunity, fears, attitudes, could all change because of our priestly commitment to prayer! We should labor in prayer. This pleases our Heavenly Father.

The Old Testament priesthood shows us that, until the law was given, the head of each family was the family priest (Gen. 8:20; 26:25; 31:54). When the law was given, the promise to perfect obedience was that Israel should be unto God "a kingdom of priests" (Ex. 19:6), but Israel violated that law and God shut up the priestly office to Aaron's family, appointing the tribe of Levi to minister to them, thus constituting the typical priesthood (Ex. 28:1).

Let's look at the believer's life in view of his position in Christ:

(1) *"But you are a chosen people"*; The Holy Spirit helped us see our need of a Saviour, to be cleansed from the sins of the past. We knew that Jesus was the remedy for our sins. We believed Jesus' blood was shed for our redemption. God chose us to know Jesus and to believe Him to be our sin bearer. We accepted and pledged our lives to Him. Thus we become set apart for special duty. Not everyone doing the same things in the same way, but deliberately spending our lives telling the "good news" of Jesus' suffering for mankind, so they too can enjoy being one of God's chosen people.

(2) *"A royal priesthood"*; Since the chief privilege of a priest is access to God, *we* can go to God individually and He hears us, each one. It is so humbling to think that Almighty God would pay attention to my supplications, trials, and misunderstandings. Yet, He does! He judges each person impartially and treats everyone with favor. What a blessing and what a bonus for stumbling and faulty men and women.

(3) *"An Holy Nation"*; The meaning of "Holy" is simply set apart for the use of God or rendered sacred by the divine present. God wants us to be holy as a nation, like He wanted Israel to be; to stand out and above all the politics, sin, blasphemy, and "God-is-dead" ideas that abound today. God has blessed our nation far and above any nation on the earth, and we have flaunted His goodness to the wind. When God chose believers to be an holy nation, He was in charge! Israel was to obey Him. We are *His* servants doing *His* work, representing *Him* to people everywhere. When were we so willing to let Satan get an advantage over our nation? We get comfortable and satisfied, but, in the meantime, the undermining evil force is at work tearing down the very fabric that men have given their lives for. God called out Israel time and time again, when they followed other gods. He will do the same for us, if we remember whose we are and turn back to the God who has led us thus far.

First Peter 1:14–16 says, *As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy"* (*NIV*). We should be holy because we are God's children.

(4) *"A peculiar people"*; Called out, separated *from the world, separated*

(continued on page 2)

In Memoriam

Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints. Psalm 116:15

Aida May Munson died July 6. She was a member of Ashland Park Street Brethren Church and WMS. One of her gifts was service: in 1966 she helped to establish and was still a member of the World Relief Sewing group; she was a volunteer for the American Red Cross and the Bayfront Medical Center in St. Petersburg, Fla., with more than 500 hours of service; and she knit winter hats for the Cleveland welfare children. We are thankful for her life and love.

Called to Declare *(continued)*

unto God. A special people to do God's work in the world. People don't understand our behavior at times, especially if we are quick to forgive, able to forget, kind when someone has mistreated us, able to pray for friend or foe. No matter what, we see the way our Heavenly Father did through Jesus and we respond lovingly, unconditionally, and show Jesus in us. That all makes us peculiar to the world. The world and unbelievers seek revenge, but Christians show a different way to live life. We want to show the world we belong to God. We don't parade signs saying it; we simply live it everyday at home and everywhere. Our families need to see the difference too. *Love* is the key word. *We love* because *He first* loved us.

(5) *"Shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light"*; We read in Exodus 25:22, *I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat.* Romans 12:1 says, *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable* [acceptable] *service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.* Psalm 136 reminds us to give thanks and praise the Lord because He is good, He is God above all gods, Lord of lords who doeth great things and whose mercy endureth forever. *All things were made by him: and without him was not any thing made that was made* (John 1:3). Our praise is due Him continually because we are recipients of all He is, all He does, and all He will do. Because we are in Him through Jesus' blood, we praise His holy name! He has called us from sinful practices into salvation and the promise of heaven.

We who are "called to declare" the unsearchable riches of the scriptures have our work cut out for us. We can even be missionaries in our own homes by letting Jesus show in our lives when dealing with family situations.

We can help our families to put Jesus first in their lives, homes, and workplace by being willing to help in time of need, and to be willing to be inconvenienced to help wherever and whomever we can.

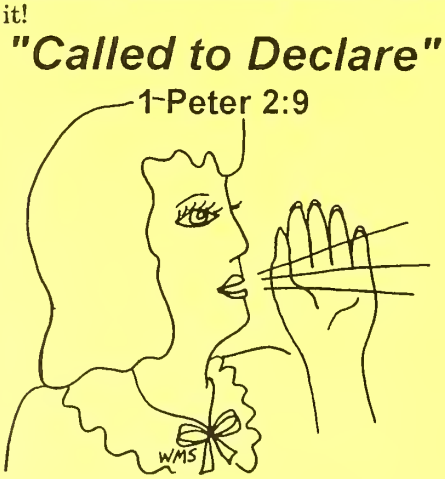
A recent communication came to me about a sailor in World War II whose parents had not heard from him for so long they considered him a war victim. But near the end of the war, the parents had a phone call and it was their son's voice. He was alive! How happy they were! During the course of their conversation, he explained that he had been caring for a war victim and found it difficult to write. This sailor lost a leg, an arm, an eye, and part of his face. His parents expressed concern over the poor sailor and then praised their son for caring for him.

The son then asked his parents for permission to bring this boy home to live with them. The son explained he didn't have another home nor anyone else to care for him. His parents expressed their concern for this wounded sailor, but didn't feel they could have him brought home to be a constant care. They didn't want the job of caring for such a battle-scarred sailor at this time in their lives. So the son said he understood and expressed his love for his parents and hung up.

The morning after they spoke with their son, they received a telegram from naval officials stating that their son had jumped from a window to his death. The parents couldn't understand why their son had reacted so violently to their decision, until the body arrived and, upon opening the casket to view the body, they saw that it was their son who had lost a leg, an arm, an eye, and part of his face. How grief-stricken they were; how sorry that they had refused their son's request.

God has called us to be His special emissaries to represent Him here on earth to anyone and to everyone. Not just happy to receive Christ ourselves, but to pass along the "good news" that "Jesus loves you and has an eternal plan for your life." Let us declare to everyone what God has done for us. It will make a great difference in this old sinful world. We truly are called to declare Jesus to a lost world. Our obedience to His Word pleases God, who treasures us.

Can we continue to say "no" when He has done so much? We are called to declare His marvelous works. Let's do it!



In Appreciation

1. To God our Heavenly Father for the blessings of the week. We were blessed far beyond our expectations with His presence, inspiration, friends, tears, hugs, and beautiful weather.
2. To the General Conference Executive Council (GCEC) for planning the inspirational Conference based on the theme, "Called to Declare."
3. To the WMS executive board for their development of the Conference theme for the women.
4. To Polly Benshoff (Ashland Park St.) for her inspiring and challenging devotional talk.
5. To Sue Price (Milford) for designing the cover of the WMS program book, calling the WMS member to declare.
6. To Berniece Miller, the liaison from the National Church Office to the University. Much of the smooth operation of Conference was due to planning and "behind the scenes" work by Berniece.
7. To Tom McConahay, the auctioneer.
8. To the Ashland University staff who provided a beautiful campus, delicious food, clean facilities, and for their friendliness and kindnesses.
9. To Grace Grumbling (Johnstown), the retiring general secretary. In addition to this position for three years, Grace edited the *Woman's Outlook* for many years.
10. To Marsha Nies (Masontown), who beautifully sang a favorite of many, "His Eye is on the Sparrow."

THE WOMAN'S OUTLOOK NEWSLETTER

Published bimonthly in January, March, May, July, September, and November by the Woman's Missionary Society of The Brethren Church.

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1325 Coachman Court
Ashland, Ohio 44805

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WMS CONFERENCE

"To Be God's People"

Almighty Father, give us a vision of a dying world that needs Your love and care.

We see the need, the yearning for a Savior, In Jesus' name, grant this our prayer.

And when we falter be Thou our comfort; guide us as Your children that our lives may be

A beacon in this darkness that surrounds us, A light that others then may see.

To be God's people in this place, live His goodness, share His grace,

Proclaim God's mercy through His Son, be His love to ev'ry one.

Nancy Hunn (Nappanee), song leader, and Dee Keplinger (Linwood), pianist, introduced the theme song by Charles F. Brown. It's a beautiful poem with a very singable melody. Even if the song is not in your hymnal, the poem can be our prayer, as we individually strive to declare. The poem is based on Phil. 2:15–16, which states that we are to shine like "lights in the world."

Study Polly Benshoff's devotions. She traced the "royal priesthood" throughout the Bible right down to us and then reminded us what to declare. This is a kind but urgent challenge.

BUSINESS

The committees and the results of their efforts are:

Credential: Mary Garver and Virginia Hook, both from Linwood, recorded a total of 108 delegates, officers, and guests.

Nominating: Charlene Rowser (Goshen), Joy Zook (Johnstown) and Mary Lou Gordon (Ardmore). The elected officers are President—Shirley Black (Ashland Park St.), Vice President—Judy Tinkel (Milford), Financial Secretary—Joanne Kroft (Ashland Garber), and Treasurer—JoAnn Seaman (Ashland Park St.).

Auditing: Donna Stoffer and Bonnie Gibson, both from Ashland Garber. The books of the financial secretary and the literature secretaries were in good order. The treasurer's books were approved by an outside auditor.

ABCs: These are the Annual Basic Commitments for individuals and societies. We sometimes call them "goals"—the foundation for personal and corporate growth.

For Individuals:

1. Have personal daily devotions, including Bible reading and prayer.
2. Personally invite at least one non-member, including high school girls, to your regular meetings.
3. Read two suggested books.

For the Society:

4. Sponsor a special ministry, service, or activity in which:
   a. the purpose of WMS is promoted.
   b. an offering is received for the Seminary.
5. Offerings and dues: (ALL CHECKS should be made payable to the National WMS and sent to the Financial Secretary: JOANNE KROFT, 608 Twp. Rd. 1151; Route 5, Ashland, Ohio 44805). (The caps are a reminder that if your checks go directly to any of the designated recipients, your society doesn't receive credit for it, because Joanne doesn't know.)
   a. National dues of $7.50 per member paid by October 31. Send with the revised Newsletter subscription list.
   b. An offering for the Seminary any time during the year.
   c. Thank Offering for benevolences and project offering, if not brought to National Conference.
6. Promote work for World Relief; follow suggestions in the WMS Service Guide for other benevolences.
7. Correspond regularly with Home and World missionaries.
8. Support the growth of the children and/or youth ministries of your church with prayers, finances, and leadership.
9. Evaluate your society's accomplishments in a written summary to the General Secretary by July 1.

Special Challenge:

10. Continue to encourage and nurture the girls and young women of your church. "Mentor" is an "in" word at present; it is also necessary. Be an example, a friend to the girls and young ladies in your church—encourage, listen, and teach them.

Financial reports to date are:

Project: $10,863.33 was received for the first year of establishing an endowment for Malaysia, providing seminary training for nationals. The two-year goal is $25,000. Continue to pray for David and Jenny Loi and the other national missionaries in Malaysia.

Thank Offering: $9,424.28 was received for this offering, which is designated for missions, both world and home, and Christian education: Riverside Christian School, Campus Ministry, the Seminary, and the AU scholarship.

Usually some offerings are received after conference, and we hope this is the case again this fall. Both the project and thank offering are several hundred dollars less than last year, which will adversely affect our budgeting and giving at next year's conference. If your offering has not been sent, or if you have additional funds in your treasury, consider contributing them now to the national WMS work.

Dues: National dues remain at $7.50 per member. This money is used for Publications and Other Expenses.

Budget: JoAnn Seaman, treasurer, presented the budget as proposed by the Board, which was adopted by the WMS conference.

Benevolences		$17,330
ATS	4,410	
World/Home Missions	8,920	
Campus Ministry	1,500	
Riverside Christian School	1,500	
Scholarship AU	1,000	
Publications		7,990
Newsletter		
Devotional Guide		
Other Expenses		2,880
Administrative		
Social Security		
Gifts and Conference		
Total		$28,200

Appointed Officers: The Board's recommendations were approved:

General Secretary, Nancy Hunn
Assistant, Trudy Kerner
Sewing and World Relief Coordinator, Joan Merrill
Editor, Newsletter, Joan Ronk
Editor, Devotional Guide, Jeanette Sullivan
Subscription Secretary, Ginny Hoyt
Literature Secretary, Kathleen Mack
Assistant, Doris Shultz

Scholarship: Karen Robins, a senior from Tucson, Arizona, received the WMS scholarship to Ashland University. You may know her; she is a Crusader in the summer. The WMS Scholarship is awarded to a senior in good standing at Ashland University.

Devotional Guide: This year Jeanette Sullivan developed the theme "A Legacy of Faith" for our monthly study. Jeanette believes that "God continues to call us as a Woman's Missionary Society to invest our energies in training the younger women in our churches to live godly lives." This emphasizes the mentoring part of Commitment 10.

Jeanette shares her Milledgeville

(continued on page 4)

Highlights *(continued)*

WMS sisters with us. Lucille Woessner prepared the program ideas again, and recipes from the church's 1991 cookbook are included. They sound delicious! Thank you, Jeanette.

Brethren Service Guide: Joan Merrill revised this publication and included many worthwhile ideas for your society to use. Sincere thanks to Joan and Marjorie Bennett, her typist.

Joan gratefully acknowledged the items for the auction: the Precious Moments quilt top pieced by Milledgeville Brethren Beacons, wall hangings quilted by Christina Moyers (Bridgewater) and the Linwood ladies. Additional items were contributed also.

SPECIALS

More than 200 ladies attended the Thursday luncheon. Each centerpiece was a 15" tall angel made of white cones and crocheted wings, holding a gold horn. The West Alexandria ladies provided the table decorations and the Midwest District made the program booklets, which coordinated beautifully with the angel centerpieces. Well done, ladies!

The North Manchester bell choir, Clarion Bells, presented a beautiful concert. Kurt Stout narrated scripture and prose, and Linda Warner directed approximately 18 men and ladies. Their music was truly lovely.

Nirmala Kumar brought greetings from India. She likened each of us to an individual bell with a nice sound, but together we praise the Lord!

The South Bend society planned the *project* ingathering. Beverly Baker gave background information about Malaysia (one missionary for 91,000 people), and Karen Crossen received the offerings. Dee Keplinger played background music.

The ladies from Peru presented an uplifting *memorial service*. Waneta Fenster read while Susie Stout prepared an ultraviolet lighted flannelgraph. It was impressive.

The *thank offering service* was planned by the Sarver ladies. Marsha Nulph read Psalm 100 and sang "How Could I Ask for More," accompanied by Marsha Nies. Helen McAfoose received the offerings while we joined in singing "Bring a Gift of Love." Dorothy Rose Tinkel concluded with prayer.

The *auction* was enjoyed by many! Tom McConahay helped to raise $900, which is designated for a new mission work in Lima, Peru.

Russ Gordon, retiring Conference moderator, installed the elected and appointed officers, basing his remarks on Col. 3:23–24.

Missionary Miscellany

Prasanth and Nirmala Kumar brought joy to our hearts as they talked about the Brethren Mission in India. They love their people, and it is their privilege to share Christ's gift of salvation.

Prasanth spoke at the Missionary Board dinner and Nirmala spoke at the WMS luncheon. They radiate with God's love. Kumar said the Indian mission began 25 years ago with two baptized Christians—himself and Nirmala. Now 3,705 are baptized members! Only 20% of India's population is Christan.

The Kumars have three methods of ministry: (1) proclamation, (2) evangelism, and (3) service, patterning their ministry after Jesus'—His ministry was for the whole person.

Unfortunately, each village has a temple with a village goddess whom the heathen worship. There are approximately 1 million gods (idols) in that nation, supporting the fact that 80% live in spiritual darkness. The Kumars have established 160 preaching points. Men are trained at the Bible Institute as (1) pastor, (2) teacher, and (3) primary health assistant. After one year at the Institute, they return to their villages. They preach of God's love and His gift of salvation; they teach reading and basic subjects; and administer simple medication. The support is $35 per month.

Nirmala appreciated the former national project, which provided the orphanage for 20 girls. These are destitute village girls who are now in a Christian home, receiving an education. There are 30 boys in the boys' orphanage. Eventually the Kumars hope to house 50 in each orphanage. In the service program, 100 women and 60 men receive vocational training, which gives them a trade so they can be self-supporting.

This summer Juan Carlos and María Miranda moved to 204 Silvermill Ct., Columbia, SC 29210-4477. Like nearly everyone who moves, María said she is still fitting everything in, but they enjoy their home. María showed her pen which she used for 15 years to write her radio scripts—it looked worn out! With a new pen in a new location, María continues to reach Spanish-speaking audiences. She is very appreciative of the cards, prayers, and support of the ladies and the Missionary Board.

As she continues to share words of encouragement on her program, she solicits our prayers that her program "Para Ti Mujer" may continue. Tapes of her programs are available from her at no cost, except for the postage. Perhaps, after listening, your society would send an offering to the Missionary Board designated for María's radio ministry.

Nancy Hostetler brought greetings from Riverside Christian School at Lost Creek, KY. She appreciated your prayers and finances, and said the work teams were fantastic! The staff is encouraged by all the remembrances they receive, and Nancy asked that we keep on doing what we do so well!

The September missionaries of the month are three home mission pastors: Jim and Lois Sluss at Krypton, Ky.; Tom and Tiona Conrad at Greenwood, Ind.; and Mark Logan, 340 Brethren Church, Bridgewater, Va.

The October missionaries are María Miranda with her Hispanic radio program and Allen Baer in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Allen, the only North American Brethren missionary in Argentina at this time, completed his furlough and returned to Buenos Aires soon after conference. As a tentmaker, he is a private tutor. As a churchman, he is the consultant to the Brethren Churches in Argentina.

The Editor's Ending

Dear Ladies,

I hope you can capture some of the enthusiasm of the WMS conference. It was a very good week. Now, we put feet to our ideas!

The first society to return their membership list and their check for dues is White Dale! Congratulations, ladies! Joanne Kroft was happy to hear from you.

Much advice and many jokes are exchanged about Labor Day. It is a holiday, started in 1882, observed in both U.S. and Canada in honor of working people. That's us! "Women's work is never done" and sometimes we agree. However, instead of thinking of work, think of your task as service.

In his installation remarks, Russ Gordon asked the officers, "Whom are you doing this for?" And that question should permeate everything we do. No matter where we work or what we do, we are serving the Lord Christ. This brightens every job. So, happy laboring!

Your friend,

Joan

Joan

General Conference Report

"The Devoted Church . . . Grows" To be 1995 General Conference Theme

IN A STIRRING MESSAGE to conclude this year's Conference, new moderator Rev. Reilly Smith introduced the 1995 General Conference theme—"The Devoted Church . . . Grows"—based on Acts 2:42–47.

In his introduction, Smith said that he had been under attack by the evil one during the past year. The attacks focused on the idea, "You are not worthy." But at the July Promise Keepers rally in Boulder, Colorado, he received a clear indication that "we don't have to be worthy because the Lord is worthy."

He reminded delegates that though the outcome of spiritual warfare is decided in God's favor, many battles still remain to be fought. At the cross, he said, "Jesus kicked his [the devil's] teeth out. He'll try to gum you to death, but you'll have to stand still to let him do it!"

In discussing the theme passage, Smith commented that the word "devoted" has Old Testament roots. To devote something meant to give it over completely to God, and it usually involved killing everything associated with it. He cited the New Testament parallel by Paul in Romans 12:1, that we are to be "living sacrifices," totally given over to God.

Smith highlighted four activities of the early church as being exemplary for The Brethren Church today. First, they were devoted "to the apostles' teaching." Holding up his Bible, he said, "We must devote ourselves to the contents of this book, and then we will grow. . . . We need to get in the Word, but we need to get it out as well."

Second, the early believers were devoted "to *the* fellowship." "We need to devote ourselves to one another. We need to do it at home, in our districts, at the national level, and in the national offices. That means participating in the ministries of The Brethren Church at home and in our districts and nationally with our time and efforts and even with our pocketbooks."



Photo by Ryan Gordon

New moderator Rev. Reilly Smith with his wife, Cindy, and two of their four children, daughters Katrina (l.) and Jofaya.

Third, we must join the early believers in being devoted "to the breaking of bread." He noted that while there is a Communion aspect here, much more is intended. "We need to invest ourselves outside . . . the four walls of our churches and get into one another's lives," he said.

Finally, the believers were devoted "to prayer." Smith said this applies to communication with each member of the Trinity. Mentioning in particular the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, he said, "The Spirit's ready to be tuned in anytime we want to be tuned in. And if we get in tune and stay in tune, the Spirit will do powerful things in our lives.

As one expression of our commitment to be investing ourselves in one another and in tuning in to God, Smith encouraged each delegate to take home a leaf from "The Tree of Life," praying for one new believer or member of the church throughout the coming year.

He concluded by asking outgoing past moderator Glenn Grumbling and the new moderator-elect, Richard Allison, to pray for denominational executives and himself, while GCEC members laid hands on each leader.

— reported by Ronald W. Waters



Unique at this year's Conference were several "living statues" on "display" at various times throughout the week, presented by youth advisors attending the BYIC Convention. On Friday morning (l. to r.) Gregg Caughell, Kristi Medsger (kneeling), Kurt Stout, Marty Haskins, and Cheryl Smith portrayed the scourging of Jesus before His crucifixion.

Photo by Dr. Jim Hollinger

General Conference Business

Delegates who attended General Conference spent most of Tuesday and Thursday mornings and part of Friday morning handling the business of the denomination. Ronald W. Waters, Director of Brethren Church Ministries, prepared the following summary of what was accomplished.

Elections

Rev. Reilly Smith was installed as the new moderator, having served the past year as moderator-elect. Smith is pastor of the Mulvane, Kans., Brethren Church. He has been a member of the General Conference Executive Council (GCEC) since 1990. He is also a member of the Missionary Board.

Dr. Richard Allison is the new moderator-elect and will be moderator in 1995–96. He was unopposed on the ballot. Allison is professor of Christian Education at Ashland Theological Seminary. He was previously moderator in 1969.

Mrs. Jeanette Sullivan, a homemaker from Milledgeville, Ill., was re-elected to GCEC for a full three-year term as Plains Region representative. Also elected to GCEC were Rev. H. Raymond Aspinall, pastor of the Bryan, Ohio, First Brethren Church (member at-large, full term); and Rev. Mark Britton, pastor of the Derby, Kans., First Brethren Church (member at-large, one-year unexpired term).

The following were elected to Brethren Church Ministries commissions:

Spiritual Formation—Brian Moore (ch.), Fred Brandon, Carolyn Cooksey, Jerry Flora, and Dee Keplinger.

Evangelism & Church Growth—Cindy Smith (ch.), Steve Cole, Tom Conrad, Cheryl Ennis, and Emery Hurd.

Leadership Development—Mary Ellen Drushal (ch.), Roy Andrews, Sherry Bowling, Jim Hollinger, and Sherry Van Duyne.

New church

The Krypton, Ky., Brethren Church was elevated from a class to full church status. This congregation was an outgrowth of the pioneering ministry of Margaret Lowery. The class was formally chartered in August 1991, and Rev. Jim Sluss became pastor in July 1992. During the past summer, attendance was averaging in the high 70s.

Financial/ Organizational Study

The 1993 General Conference authorized the moderator to appoint a committee to employ an outside facilitator to assist in the development of "comprehensive strategies for long-range and short-range financial and organizational planning." The committee completed its work and presented its report to GCEC in March. (*See summary report in the April 1994 Evangelist, pages 10–11; copies of the consultant's full report are available from The Brethren Church National Office for $5.00 plus $2.00 for postage and handling.*)

GCEC had previously announced that it would bring no formal recommendations on reorganization to this year's Conference. Instead, guided small-group discussions of the study's findings were held during the Thursday morning business session.

A summary of the discussions will be presented to the National Leadership Council, GCEC, and the Missionary Board in meetings this fall.

New agreement

A new covenant of understanding between The Brethren Church, Inc., and the Missionary Board was announced to the Conference. The purpose of the covenant is to forge a closer working relationship between the two organizations.

The covenant calls for formation of a National Leadership Council composed of the General Conference Moderator-Track, the Director of Brethren Church Ministries (DBCM), and the president and the Executive Director of the Missionary Board. The council will meet about four times per year to consider matters of mutual interest and concern of both corporate bodies and of the church as a whole.

The covenant also calls for the DBCM to attend Missionary Board meetings and the Executive Director of the Missionary Board to attend GCEC meetings.

In addition, the two organizations have agreed to form a joint Office of Stewardship and Planned Giving as a first step in addressing the long-term financial needs of the church. The Missionary Board envisioned such an office



Newly elected (*) and formerly elected members of General Conference Executive Council, photographed during their installation, are (l. to r.) moderator Reilly Smith, past moderator Russell Gordon, moderator-elect Richard Allison, Gene Eckerley, Raymond Aspinall*, Jeanette Sullivan* (re-elected for a full term), Brenda Colijn, Mark Britton*, Pat Velanzon, and (not pictured) Dave West.* Photo by Ryan Gordon

several years ago and offered to enter into a joint arrangement with the church. Rev. James R. Black will be employed as part-time director of the office upon his retirement in May 1995.

Motion on baptism study

Conference delegates adopted a motion (with 62% voting in favor of the motion) that "the National Association of Brethren Church Elders be charged with studying the issue of the reception of people into local church membership who had previously been baptized by any form of believer's baptism and that the association bring a recommendation to the 1995 General Conference. Further, those who have views for and against this issue be encouraged to state their views in the EVANGELIST."

The study is a follow-up to an extensive examination of belief and practice of baptism in the 1970s. That study resulted in action to retain trine immersion as the mode of baptism in The Brethren Church but to allow congregations the option of receiving persons who had been immersed as believers by any other mode.

The proposed study will consider whether it is biblically permissible to receive into membership persons who have been baptized by a mode other than immersion (by pouring or sprinkling, for example) after they have made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ. The study does not propose a change in the historic Brethren practice of trine immersion.

1995 local church goals

Conference adopted four major goals for recommendation to local churches. These goals are essentially the same as those recommended for 1994. They reflect the mission statement of The Brethren Church and the "Priorities for the Nineties."

One goal calls for congregations to "study the possibility of beginning a new church by December 31, 1995, either singly or with one or more other congregations, with the cooperation of the national Missionary Board and the New Church Development Commission." This is the final year for this goal, which was first recommended in 1993.

Congregations are also encouraged to "challenge and officially call at least one person/couple/family from the congregation to prepare for or enter vocational ministry." The goals report for 1993 revealed that 65 percent of reporting churches had neither called anyone to ministry during the year nor had anyone in preparation for ministry.

Other goals related to on-going denominational emphases and fair share support goals. The fair share support figures have remained the same since 1992.

Statistical Report

At the end of 1993, membership in The Brethren Church totaled 13,117, down 15 from 1992. Districts that increased in membership were Ohio (up 5%), Southwest (up 3%), and Midwest (up less than 1%).

Membership growth by conversion was up 31% over 1992, and total membership gain was 1,030. Reversion (members removed from the roll) was the largest factor in losses, accounting for 642 members (61% of the losses). On the bright side, total membership losses were down nearly 6% from 1992.

Average worship attendance for 1993 was 10,717, down 382 (3%). Only two districts had an increase in worship attendance—Midwest (up 24%) and Southwest (up 4%).

Average Sunday school attendance continued to slide, dropping 4% for the year. Only the Pennsylvania District had an increase in Sunday school attendance, up nearly 3% over 1992.

Total giving to local churches was up 5%, at $8.2 million, with total local church income at $9.1 million. Total expenses were $8.4 million. Giving per member was $623, up 5% from 1992.

Ralph McBride, presenting his final report as statistician, again raised concern about the low level of attendance at Communion—less than 38% of members in 1993 and down one-half of one percentage point from 1992.

1995 planning budget

Conference adopted a balanced planning budget for 1995 calling for $680,000 of support/revenue and of expenses for the national office. Of this amount, $310,000 (46%) is slated to come from fair share financial support from local churches for Brethren Church Ministries, plus $98,000 (14%) in support for World Relief and Christian Campus Ministry. The remainder is expected to come from individual contributions, registrations, and sales of materials. The total budget is down about 5% from the 1994 planning budget.

Major additions to the budget include:

- The Brethren Church, Inc., share of the joint office of stewardship and planned giving ($10,000).
- Denominational membership in The Andrew Center (a multi-denominational resourcing center for evangelism and congregational revitalization), and a subsidy fund for local church memberships ($15,000).
- Funding to provide a version of THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST to every home.

Ronald W. Waters, treasurer, announced that GCEC plans to implement fully the planning budget, drawing from reserves if necessary, rather than maintain the status quo. Local church funding in recent years has rarely exceeded 70% of full support. A similar shortfall in 1995 would require drawing $93,000 from reserve funds.

Future Conferences

The 1995 General Conference will be held August 7–11 in Ashland. The 1996 Conference, scheduled for August 5–9, will likewise be held in Ashland. Delegates adopted a motion expressing an intention to hold the 1997 General Conference in Indiana.

Delegate data

The delegate total was 390, down from the 431 registered delegates in 1993, but comparable to the 397 delegates in 1992. [⇧]

General Conference Report

The BYIC Convention

YOUTH from across the denomination (125 of them) gathered for a week of worship and spiritual growth at the Brethren Youth in Christ Convention held August 8–12 on the campus of Ashland University.

National BYIC had another good year in 1994. BYIC membership for the year reached a total of 890, an increase of 60 members from 1993. The Lord is continuing to bless our youth!

The youth again went over their budgeted ingathering amount of $6,500, bringing a total ingathering of $9,853.03. The extra amount will be used for the work of the BYIC. Many thanks to all of the youth for their hard work and their dedication to reaching this year's goal. A generous portion of this ingathering will go for the 1993 project of ministry in Russia. The money will be sent to CoMission in memory of Rev. Mark Baker, who had planned to serve in Russia through this organization before his untimely illness and death.

Some other highlights of the Convention included comedian Bob Stromberg; Brethren missionaries K. Prasanth and Nirmala Kumar and Allen Baer, who shared about their ministries during the missions worship service; Communion, led by Pastor James Kirkendall; and a challenging message by Pastor Rickey Bolden at the Thursday evening worship service. Other events enjoyed by the youth were seminars, an obstacle course, Coffeehouse, Super Praise, Crusader Review, Share & Prayer groups, and evening worship services.



Members of the 1995 BYIC Steering Committee are (l. to r.) Chad Geaslen, Angela Szelong, Chris Diehl, Christy Van Duyne, Aaron Hollewell, Jaime Gillespie, and Adam Baker.

Photo by Ryan Gordon

The 1995 Steering Committee was announced on Friday morning. Those serving on this committee during the coming year will be Chad Geaslen, University Church; Jaime Gillespie, Vinco; Angela Szelong, Valley; Aaron Hollewell, Lanark; Adam Baker, University Church; Christy Van Duyne, Park Street; and Chris Diehl, Fairless Hills-Levittown.

Please begin praying now for the 1995 BYIC Convention, which will be held August 7–11!

— reported by Debra Ritchey

General Conference Auxiliaries

Association of Brethren Elders

REV. BRIAN MOORE, pastor of the St. James, Md., Brethren Church, spoke to the Tuesday afternoon session of the National Association of Brethren Church Elders. He addressed the elders on the topic, "Pastoral Care: Who's Looking Out for You?"

Rev. Moore pointed out changes in society that have made the pastor's job more difficult than in the past. Individualism is running rampant throughout our society and our churches. Pluralism has been replaced by freedom from religion and a strong anti-Christian bias. Consumerism has consumed the soul of our nation. Although we know that the pastor has one of the most significant tasks in the world, pastors are often portrayed as being useless.

These changes have taken their toll on pastors. Some have tried to do too much, resulting in mediocrity. Others have been overcome by frustration when the battle with the world has been compounded with attacks from within the church. Still others have fallen prey to cynicism and burnout.

The complexity of the pastorate means that being part of a ministry team is no longer a luxury but a necessity. Ecclesiastes 4:9–12 begins, "Two are better than one" and concludes with "A cord of three strands is not quickly broken."

Following Rev. Moore's message, the elders divided into groups of five with instructions to discuss the following statements: (1) This is exciting to me. (2) This is tough. It was a powerful time of discussion and prayer.

The business session that followed included a report of the Brethren Pastoral Family Retreat held April 19–21 at Brown County State Park in southern Indiana and plans for the 1995 retreat to be held April 25–27 in Walnut Creek, Ohio. Dr. Fred Finks re-

ported on Ministerial Student Aid and challenged the elders to raise their annual scholarship for a Brethren Ashland Theological Seminary student from $500 to $1,000, to match that of the Brethren Men of Mission. (The elders went one better and increased the amount to $1,250, effective in 1996). T.J. McLaughlin was chosen to receive the 1995 scholarship.

Dr. Charles Munson led a time of devotions during the Thursday afternoon meeting. Drawing from 2 Chronicles 26:5, he reminded the elders of the need for holiness in the ministry. King Uzziah, mentored by the prophet Zechariah, found success "as long as he sought the Lord." But when pride filled his heart and he took it upon himself to burn incense to the Lord, he broke out in leprosy (26:16, 19).

Memorials were presented for deceased elder Dr. Leslie E. Lindower and for a number of Brethren laymen. In elections, Gene Eckerley, Dennis Sigle, Gerald Barr, and Richard Craver were re-elected president, vice-president, secretary-treasurer, and assistant secretary-treasurer respectively.

— reported by Rev. Fred Miller.

Note: A report of the National W.M.S. conference is included in the *Woman's Outlook Newsletter* in the center of this EVANGELIST.

Brethren Men of Mission

DURING the week of General Conference, members and leaders of the Brethren Men of Mission shared times of reflection and devotion in addition to conducting their annual business.

Doran Hostetler shared on update on the continuing ministry of Riverside Christian Training School in Lost Creek, Ky. He thanked the men for their continued financial support of scholarships and noted the finalization of the recent school addition.

Steve Huber shared the positive effect attending the Promise Keepers gathering in Indianapolis had had on his life, and he encouraged other men to attend future gatherings. Tim Rowsey then told about the "7 Promises of a Promise Keeper," which include honoring Christ, vital relationships with a few other men, purity of life, and commitment to marriage and family, to the church and its leaders, to biblical unity, and to obedience to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission.

President Ken Van Duyne challenged the men to be aware of changing trends that offer new opportunities for service and witness. He emphasized that members must not just "go through the motions," but rather strive to be authentic Christians.

In this light, the 1994/95 goals challenged members to be leaders both at home and at church, to develop relationships with men and boys locally, and to continue their support of Home Missions, Ashland Theological Seminary, and Riverside Christian School.

Bruce Gorrell, Stan Gentle, and Ken Van Duyne were re-elected to the executive committee, each for a three-year term.

— by Matthew Hamel

Missionary Board Begins Search for New Executive Director

At its August 8 meeting, the Missionary Board received with regrets an announcement by Rev. James R. Black of his resignation as Executive Director of the board. His resignation will become effective May 29, 1995, when he will retire from his current position.

Rev. Black has capably served the Missionary Board since August 1981, when he became Director of Home Missions. He became Executive Director of the board in January 1985. Under his leadership Brethren missions extended into Paraguay and Peru, as well as expanding in both the home and world arenas.

In order to ensure a smooth transition to a new Executive Director, a Search Committee has been formed by the Missionary Board to begin the selection process for Rev. Black's successor. This committee invites applications and nominations from The Brethren Church for this position.

The person selected as Executive Director of the Missionary Board will serve as chief executive officer and as such will be responsible for directing all operations and ministries of the board. These include, but are not limited to:

- casting and sharing the vision for Brethren missions;
- developing programs and resources;
- supervising other office staff;
- promoting all aspects of Brethren missions;
- recruiting missionary personnel;
- visiting mission fields for administrative purposes;
- serving as a resource leader throughout the brotherhood.

The Search Committee seeks a person with the qualifications stated by Paul to Timothy in 1 Timothy 3. In addition, the person—male or female, elder or layperson—must demonstrate these qualifications:

- a strong commitment to missions;
- a proven record of leadership;
- membership in The Brethren Church and of good reputation among the Brethren;
- high moral, ethical, and spiritual character;
- proficiency in public speaking, marketing, fundraising, promotion;
- advanced degrees and/or ministry experience.

Applicants must submit written statements regarding their:

- personal faith;
- call to the ministry (if applicable);
- qualifying gifts and abilities for this position;
- perspective on and vision for Brethren missions.

The Search Committee will receive applications and nominations until October 1, followed by a process of screening applications, conducting interviews, and checking references. The committee expects to make its recommendation to the Missionary Board as its November meeting.

The Missionary Board requests the continued prayers of The Brethren Church for Brethren missions and for this search process.

Nominations and applications should be sent to:

MBBC Search Committee
c/o Mrs. Dorman Ronk
1325 Coachman Court
Ashland, OH 44805

What's Hatchin' in Passing On the Promise?

A report by Ronald W. Waters, national coordinator for this three-year evangelism and church growth process.

THE MAJORITY of the Passing On the Promise (POtP) churches have completed Level I and have begun Level II of the three-year process. The original pilot church—Waterbrook—completed the process this summer. The other five pilot churches—Ardmore, Bethlehem, New Paris, Northgate, and South Bend—have completed Level II and are now in their final year of the process.

This past summer, pastors and congregational co-coordinators attended Evangelism Leaders Academies in five locations for encouragement and training for the next year.

Part of the academy experience is to report on activities and developments in home churches that have resulted from the POtP process. This reporting takes place by recording information on a chicken hatching from an egg—reporting on "what's hatchin'" in their own churches.

Following is a compilation of some of "what's hatchin'." As you read these activities, take note of ideas that may be useful in your church as well. Then contact the congregational co-coordinators or the pastor of that church.



Attitudes and involvement

Many churches reported that new, more positive attitudes are developing among the people in their congregations:

- New spirit of cooperation (Tiosa)
- Attitude changes have been positive (Burlington, Jefferson, Goshen, Muncie)
- Because of distance, hosted own District Support Meeting with large percentage of church participating (Cheyenne)
- More of an outreach feeling in the church (Peru)
- People are looking for opportunities to contact unbelievers (Northgate)
- New cooperation for POtP emphasis (Walcrest)
- Sharing loaves of bread and Christmas cards impressed congregation that "Hey, I can do this part!" (Waterloo Hammond Ave.)
- Over 50 pledged commitment to POtP by signing a covenant (Sarasota)
- More people want to get involved in reaching the lost (St. Luke)
- POtP congregational co-coordinators have learned to spread the work around; though people might not do the assignment exactly like we'd do it, it's still okay (Mulvane)
- Really see the power when two or more gather in prayer (Milford)
- People have become more aware of visitors, of what they see when they arrive, and their need to be welcomed; some who have not been very involved have become more active (St. James)
- Seeing more people willing to take on leadership responsibilities (Walcrest)
- People have realized the church needs to grow and have begun to see ways it can happen that they could not see before (Wayne Heights)
- Just the emphasis on evangelism has created an excitement that has caused the church to grow numerically (Bloomingdale)



"It is still early in the Passing On the Promise process for most of the churches. . . . These beginning signs, however, bode well for the congregations that have committed themselves to this arduous task."

- Support for the process has been growing; prayer support has become a vital part of the process (Garber)
- A clear, cooperative spirit has been evident among the church leadership (Maurertown)
- Our older congregation has been more open to change, willing to step out, to settle some old issues (Bethlehem)
- Good attitudes, enthusiasm, and cooperation from all age groups; new leaders emerging (Linwood)
- Discovery of need for church body and leadership to come to a unity of vision and goal, even if ideas of process differ (St. James)
- Before POtP we were ready to move forward but didn't know where or how; POtP has given us a destination and a road map (Bloomingdale)
- New senior high youth leaders have emerged (St. Luke)
- People are now looking to talk to visitors *before* talking to their friends (Northgate)
- People are coming forward to take leadership in outreach activities (Derby)

Positive response to self-study and Growth Workshop

As part of the Passing On the Promise process, each church conducts an extensive self-study of the congregation and the community. The written self-studies (between 80 and 100 pages) were submitted to someone outside the congregation (chosen by the Evangelism & Church Growth Commission and me as national POtP coordinator), who offered an outsider's perspective.

The results of the self-study became the basis for a Growth Workshop this spring. The goal of the workshop is to bring together as many people from the congregation as possible for a day of brainstorming and planning how the congregation may become better involved in outreach.

Following are comments related to the self-study and the Growth Workshops:

- Became aware of 34,000 people not active in any faith living within 5 miles of our church; and their main needs are ones we should be able to meet! Self-study helped us make important decisions between possible alternatives (Bloomingdale)
- Self-study helped congregation get a better understanding of surrounding community (Oak Hill)
- The Growth Workshop was so exciting—everyone attending took part; every activity chosen had someone willing to give leadership (Mulvane)
- 50% of worship attendance attended the Growth Workshop; more people involved in activities of the church since our Growth Workshop (College Corner)
- 30 people took an active part in Growth Workshop—enthusiastic and creative in brainstorming (Goshen)
- Became aware of holes in current church ministry and outreach (St. James)
- 35 persons spent a whole Saturday at our Growth Workshop to build four new ministries (Dutchtown)
- Growth Workshop inspired new and creative ideas for reaching out in the community and a clear sense of the possibilities (Sarasota)
- An exciting Growth Workshop helped us become open to how many our people could reach and realize it is up to us all (Wayne Heights)

Response to study courses

Churches in Level I participated in two study courses during the year. The first was *Promise for the Future*, a 13-week introduction to evangelism and church growth. The second study, *Living Proof*, was a 12-week video course on how to share our Christian faith in the natural relationships of daily life. Level II and III churches participated in similar studies.

Following are some of the comments related to these study courses:

- We developed four new Bible study groups out of *Living Proof* (Lanark)
- Two neighbors began attending church due to one *Living Proof* participant putting the principles into practice (Cheyenne)
- About 40 people took part in *Living Proof* (Lanark)
- One-third of adults in Sunday school participated in *Promise for the Future*; all adult classes will offer *Reaching Out in Word and Deed* this fall (Berlin)
- More people offering personal testimonies; about one-third of congregation were involved in *Living Proof* (Waterloo Hammond Ave.)
- At least one *Living Proof* couple is seeing one of their "Ten Most Wanted List" couples beginning to attend church (Burlington)
- *Living Proof* enabled one of newest members to visualize self as an active witness (Bloomingdale)
- New couple attending because a *Living Proof* couple began to share with them (Mulvane)
- *Promise for the Future* offered a renewed challenge to outreach and made students more aware of their responsibilities (Sarasota)
- *Living Proof* gave me an understanding of what non-Christians really think about their way of life (Cheyenne)
- *Living Proof* was one of our best opportunities to come together as a church in a long time as all Sunday school classes joined together; great seeing younger and older members interacting about

new ways to reach out to the unsaved (Pleasant View)
- We started two new care groups during *Living Proof*; now have 35–40 people trained to do evangelism (Bloomingdale)
- *Living Proof* changed some attitudes toward the role of individuals in evangelism; led to three women doing nursing home visitation (Peru)
- Had our first home study in several years involving couples studying *Living Proof* (Dutchtown)
- Several new teachers stepped forward to lead *Living Proof* sessions (Mulvane)
- Learned there are many ways to communicate that "living proof" (Sarasota)
- *Living Proof* gave several "older" adults new hope in their ability to share (Cheyenne)
- The study helped draw us together and helped us in our outreach (Columbus First)
- All adult classes took part in *Promise for the Future* (Tiosa)

New ministries

One goal of the Growth Workshop is to help the congregation discover and implement new ways to reach out in word and deed by inviting and welcoming new people; to include and involve those new people in the life and ministry of the church; and to help everyone grow in Christian discipleship. Following are some of the activities congregations have chosen to help them accomplish these tasks:

- Support group for interested and fledgling evangelists (Waterloo Hammond Ave.)
- Organizing members for greeting and welcoming new people (Walcrest, Linwood, Bloomingdale, Bethlehem, Muncie)
- Regular prayer emphasis (College Corner)
- Concert of Prayer Sunday (Burlington)
- New elevator (Ardmore)
- Considering facilities expansion (Mt. Olive, Cheyenne)
- Leadership training course (Northwest Chapel)
- Playground equipment (County Line)
- Kids Klub (New Paris) and "Cactus Kingdom Kids" hiking group (Northwest Chapel)
- Prayer partners (Tiosa, Trinity)
- Specific prayer for needs in our community (St. Luke)
- A seeker style service for Evangelism Sunday (Dutchtown)
- Had or planning a neighborhood "block party" (Park Street, Goshen)
- Visitor registration (St. Luke)
- Christian aerobics class for community (South Bend, County Line)
- Divorce recovery group (South Bend)
- New or refurbished church sign (South Bend, Jefferson, Lanark, New Paris, County Line)
- Use parking lot for rollerskating/rollerblade arena (County Line, Goshen)
- Have created a Welcome Center (Jefferson)
- Adopt-a-Grandparent program in planning stages (Mt. Olive)
- Action idea board (Sarasota)
- Positive action towards nursery and bathrooms; recognized need for accessibility for the disabled and for visitor follow-up (Lanark)
- Planning a youth night with contemporary Christian music for community (New Lebanon)
- Snack & Yack (Linwood)
- New brochure (Linwood) and new visitor's packet/registration process (Northgate)
- Mail-in survey for visitors (Muncie)
- Friendship Sunday in the park (New Paris)
- Added choruses to hymns in worship (Roanoke, Muncie) and added musicians to enhance worship (Oak Hill)
- New outreach Bible study in Catalina beginning in September; also starting small groups in Tucson (Northwest Chapel)
- Considering upgrading parking lot (Derby)
- Alternative service held on "neutral turf" (local motel) to reach 18–30 year olds on Saturday evenings (Waterbrook)
- Deacons have developed plan to "touch" first time visitors within 36 hours (Milford)
- Opening building for use by Alcoholics Anonymous (Berlin), Senior Citizens and Lamaze classes (Hagerstown)
- Monthly "Open Mike Night" to provide opportunity for Christian and pre-Christian musicians to perform and for building redemptive relationships (Waterbrook)
- Visitors invited back next Sunday for full meal after church (Maurertown)
- Name tags (Jefferson)
- "Appointment Driving Outreach" to offer rides to community people lacking transportation (Hagerstown)
- New young adult class, new children's youth group, Welcome class for new members and visitors, and new church van (N. Manchester)
- Sunday morning prayer time (Maurertown, Trinity)
- Expanding use of fish fry to publicize our church (N. Manchester)

What's Ahead For POtP Churches

This fall, members of Passing On the Promise churches will be participating in one of two study courses.

Level II churches (most congregations) will take part in the first of four study/action units. Through *Reaching Out in Word and Deed*, participants will study the biblical basis for sharing our faith. The concluding lessons help students consider specific ways they may share their faith in words and in actions. Rev. Larry Baker, pastor of the South Bend, Indiana, First Brethren Church, has written a leader's manual for this study.

Level III churches (remaining pilot churches) will participate in the third study/action unit, *Including and Involving New People*. This course examines how we may take an active role in helping new believers in Christ and new members of our congregations become part of the life and ministry of the church. Rev. Baker has prepared the leader's manual for this course as well.

Many churches have or will conduct a theme emphasis Sunday this fall to call attention to the good news that Christians have to share and the place of the church in providing a place for encouragement and support.

If your church is participating in Passing On the Promise, be sure to take advantage of these special activities.

- Prison ministry, "Heartline grief management" (Lanark)
- New small group opportunities (Lanark, Bethlehem, Berlin)
- New visitation ministry (Park Street)
- Considering (Cheyenne) or implementing (Berlin) second worship service

Indications of Growth

Not every church reported whether or not it had experienced numerical growth during the past year. Because the first year is a time for laying a foundation for outreach, many churches do not have growth until later in the process. Nevertheless, the following growth reports were received:

- 6 new members by baptism (Roanoke)
- 8 new members; choir has doubled in size; starting new Sunday school class this fall (St. Luke)
- 17 new members (New Paris)
- 11 new members since last September; one new member attended Evangelism Leaders Academy (Linwood)
- Seeing more family members attending who have not attended in past 10 years (Waterloo Hammond Ave.)
- 9 baptized and received into membership; 4 baptized but not yet taken into membership; 2 awaiting baptism; 3 new members by transfer; this is compared to no new members the prior year (College Corner)
- An increase in worship attendance (Wayne Heights)
- The church called one member into ministry; licensed this summer (Linwood)
- 6–8 attending new Sunday school class for singles; 8–10 new kids coming to neighborhood roller-skating outreach (Goshen)
- At least 10 new members (New Lebanon)
- 11 baptisms; Sunday school and worship attendances up 18% and 13% respectively (N. Manchester)
- 11 baptisms (Lanark)
- 1 new adult Sunday school class (South Bend)
- 21 baptized in June; second baptism scheduled in September (Park Street)
- At least half our members have brought unchurched visitors to church in past year (Bloomingdale)
- 11 men went to Promise Keepers rally (N. Manchester)
- 3 young girls made a decision for the Lord (Tiosa)
- Had nearly 90 for Easter worship; in April we had an all-time monthly high average worship attendance; we reached our worship attendance goal of a 50% increase in only 9 months (Bloomingdale)
- 5 baptized and 2 more awaiting baptism (Peru)
- More visitors in 1994 than in 1984 through 1993 (Cheyenne)
- Distribution of loaves of bread on Friendship Sunday resulted in three new families (Hagerstown)
- More uninvited visitors coming; almost as if God were blessing our efforts to be faithful (Bloomingdale)

Concluding thoughts

It is still early in the Passing On the Promise process for most of the churches. When the Church of the Brethren researched the results of POtP, they found that numerical growth often followed completion of the process by a period of time. These beginning signs, however, bode well for the congregations that have committed themselves to this arduous task.

Please continue to pray for each of these churches, and for all Brethren, that we may be diligent about sharing the good news of saving faith in Jesus Christ. [⇧]

Situation Updates from World Relief

Rwandan refugees:

The United Nations has asked World Relief to expand its ministry among Rwandan children who have been separated from their parents or orphaned in the war. Recently, a congressional leader, Jim Dyer, from the House Foreign Appropriations Minority Staff, saw World Relief's program firsthand, in which these unaccompanied children are placed in the care of Christian families on the scene—a unique, loving approach to this heartbreaking situation. Pray for World Relief staff as they work with the local church in expanding this effort to care for these children.

Haitian refugees:

World Relief is coordinating the efforts of a 17-member team that provides medical and social services to more than 14,000 Haitian refugees at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. World Relief continues to arrange for shipments of badly-needed supplies for these refugees, including new clothing, tennis shoes, toys, school supplies, sewing materials and fabric, musical instruments, and Creole Bibles. For details on providing these gifts, call World Relief/USA office at 914-268-4135.

Cuban refugees:

Approximately 30,000 Cubans are now in American internment camps, where World Relief is helping to minister to them. In addition to providing food and clothing, World Relief has given 1,000 Scripture portions of John and Romans to refugees at Krome Detention Center in Miami, Fla., where refugees who make it to U.S. shores are being detained.

Providing Scripture and holding optional worship services for refugees have born much fruit. "Although we're just a turn-around center, we have had more than 4,500 professions of faith in Christ in the past out of 12,000 people cared for," said Tom Willey, World Relief's Area Director for South Florida and Chairman of the Board of the Key West Transit Home for Cuban Refugees in Key West, Fla. According to Willey, there is a tremendous spiritual hunger in Cuba, especially among young people.

Churches may respond to the needs of the Cuban people by praying for Cuban churches and for Cuban believers and refugees still fleeing Cuba. They may also gather or organize drives for *new* clothing and toys for the refugees. Needed are small-sized clothing for men, women, and children—shorts, T-shirts, summer sleeping apparel, and underwear. For more information, contact Tom Willey, World Relief Miami, at 305-541-8320.

Park Street Church Hosts Block Party To Say "Thank You" to Its Neighbors

Ashland, Ohio — Park Street Brethren Church of Ashland, on Sunday, July 10, hosted a neighborhood block party.

The purpose of the block party was to say "Thank you" (in advance) to the neighbors of the church for their patience during the building and expansion of the church building that is currently taking place. The block party was also a kick-off for the week of vacation Bible school that began the following day.

The event was organized by the church's Fellowship Ministry (Janet Hoffman, ch.) Outreach Ministry (John Gilmer, ch.), and Worship Ministry (Doug Cooper, ch.). Food and game booths were sponsored by adult Sunday school classes. Food was free or sold for a minimal amount, and most games were free. Prizes for the games were donated by local merchants and businesses in Ashland, including The Carpenter's Shop (Brethren bookstore), Wal-Mart, Kmart, Landoll Inc. (printers), National Latex, Harlow's (variety store), and Hedstrom Corporation. Foods included hot dogs, potato chips, sausage sandwiches, popcorn, shaved ice, homemade pies, and beverages.

The sixth grade S.S. class sponsored a Guess How Many contest with jars of candy; the junior high class did Face Painting; the Adventurers Class conducted a Cupcake Walk; and the Senior Highs sponsored a Wet Sponge Throw, a Marshmallow Stuffing Contest, and a Biggest Bubble contest. In addition, the Park Street Pre-School offered an art table and the Outreach Ministry provided an information booth. Two members of the Ashland Evening Lions' Clowns service organization entertained the crowd by creating balloon animals. Music, both live and taped, was arranged by the Worship Ministry.

What really added to the success of the event was the cool, fair-like weather that arrived in the Ashland area in time for the block party, following a long hot and humid spell. This was seen as the Lord's blessing on the occasion.

The week of VBS that followed the block party registered the highest number of participants in recent years. More than 180 children and adults were involved in "CODE J.E.S.U.S.." a detective theme tracing the Apostle Paul's travels. More than 20 children were walk-in registrants the first evening, suggesting that the block party generated interest among neighborhood children. Dr. Doug Little, professor at Ashland Theological Seminary, led a workshop for adults on spiritual gifts.

The various ministries that planned this event encourage groups within other churches to consider working together to plan an all-church event to reach out to the community while strengthening relationships within the church.

— reported by Margaret Hess, Fellowship Ministry member



Bonnie Summy (r.) and Helen McClellan offer Polly Benshoff a piece of pie.



Shelby Edwards seems apprehensive as Mindy Waters prepares to paint a picture on her face.

Executive Director Resigns At Brethren Retreat Center

Shipshewana, Ind. — Gary Cotter, Executive Director of the Brethren Retreat Center at Shipshewana, has resigned.

Cotter, with his wife, Molly, and their two children, moved from Texas to Indiana six years ago to fill this position. Under his direction much was accomplished at the Retreat Center. He instituted the Camp Ambassador program, which became an effective way of communicating with Brethren churches in the Indiana district. He also established a counselor-run camping program and a scholarship program for counselors. During his years as Executive Director at the Retreat Center, the number of summer campers steadily increased, setting new attendance records.

The board of directors of the Retreat Center is currently seeking a qualified candidate to fill the position being vacated by Cotter. Interested persons should contact Rev. Carl M. Phillips, 69988 U.S. 31 S., Lakeville, IN 46536 (phone, 219-784-3352).

The board of directors is currently conducting a capital fund drive and hopes to relocate the camp to a more rural location sometime in the future.

— reported by Rev. Carl M. Phillips

Little Crusader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

Hi boys and girls!

If someone were to ask me what I am afraid of, I could make a long list of things such as snakes, mice, and—most importantly—storms. Whenever there is a bad storm with thunder and lightning, I feel like going to bed and covering my head and ears with a large blanket until the storm is over.

I guess I'm not the only one who has a fear of storms. In the Gospel of Mark, chapter 4, verses 35–41, it says that one time when Jesus was traveling with His disciples in a boat, a "furious squall" (very bad storm) came up. The waves on the lake were so high that they nearly upset the boat. The disciples were very scared, but Jesus was asleep in the boat. The disciples woke Jesus and asked Him, "Don't you care if we drown?" Then Jesus got up and spoke to the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" And immediately the wind stopped blowing and it became completely calm.

Jesus was very concerned that His disciples were afraid. He wants His followers to remember that He is always with them and that they should never be afraid. The word used in the Bible to talk about this is *faith*. Having *faith* in Jesus means that we trust Him to take care of us no matter what kinds of things scare us. On the day of that storm, Jesus was physically with His disciples. Even though Jesus is not with us physically today, He is always with us through His Spirit. Therefore, we never have a reason to ever be afraid again!



Read Mark 4:35–41. Then number the following sentences so that the events are in the correct order.

_____ The disciples were afraid.

_____ Jesus got into a boat with His disciples.

_____ Jesus commanded the wind to be quiet.

_____ A storm came up.

Unscramble this word and write its meaning.

A F T I H _____

It means _____

_____

_____

Rev. Alvin Grumbling Honored by Flora Church Upon His Retirement from Pastoral Ministry

Flora, Ind. — Rev. Alvin Grumbling was honored at a retirement party held Sunday, June 26, by the Flora First Brethren Church.

Rev. Grumbling (67) retired from the active pastorate on July 1, following almost 45 years of service as a pastor. He began his full-time ministry in October 1949 and was ordained on March 26, 1950.

During the morning worship service on June 26, Joseph Collins, moderator of the Flora Church, presented a plaque to Rev. Grumbling and a love gift to the Grumbling family on behalf of the congregation. The retirement party was then held that afternoon.



Rev. Alvin Grumbling, with his wife Meg at his side, receives a plaque from Moderator Joseph Collins expressing the appreciation of the Flora First Brethren Church for his 18 years as their pastor. Photo by Martin Rinehart

A native of Johnstown, Pa., where he became a member of the Johnstown Third Brethren Church, Grumbling received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Ashland College and attended Ashland Theological and Xenia Seminaries. During his years in the pastoral ministry, he served Brethren congregations in Pittsburgh, Pa.; Bryan, Ohio; Stockton, Calif.; Manteca, Calif.; Newark, Ohio; and (since July 1, 1976) Flora, Ind. While at the Flora Church his involvement in the Indiana District included serving five years on the District Mission Board, five years as conference treasurer, and five years on the Board of Directors of the Brethren Retreat Center at Shipshewana.

Since May 30, 1948, Rev. Grumbling has been married to the former Mary E. (Meg) Gilmer. They had two children, Gary, who lives with his parents, and Dennis, who passed away on June 11, 1993.

The Grumblings continue to live in Flora, where they have purchased a home. Though official retired Rev. Grumbling continues to serve on a part-time basis at The Brethren's Home in Flora.

— reported by Mildred Mullendore

Party at Tucson Brethren Church Celebrates 25th Anniversary of Arizona Brethren Camp

Tucson, Ariz. — Balloons, streamers, clowns, birthday decorations, and picture-laden walls and bulletin boards welcomed the nearly 100 celebrators who attended the 25th anniversary party of the Arizona Brethren Church Camp (ABC), held May 15th at the Tucson First Brethren Church.

As each person arrived for the party, he or she was given a "birthday card" featuring a montage of pictures and reports taken from past issues of the EVANGELIST, which detailed the history of Brethren camping in Arizona, the purchase and development of the camp property near Patagonia, Ariz., and the 1969 Brethren Youth Crusaders' project in support of the purchase of the property.



Former campers (and now sometimes staff members) (l. to r.) Marty McKinney Stamper, Gwen Stogsdill McKinney, Loretta Fanning, Nancy Janzen Lauber, and Joy Trent sing the ABC Camp song.

The party was hosted by camp trustees Jim and Ellen Fisher, who used a video, old movies, and slides to relate the history of the camp. The celebration opened with comments by the members of the original board that evaluated and purchased the camp property. Former campers also shared recollections of the good old days of camp life.

Refreshments consisted of camp food, including grilled hot dogs and hamburgers, chips, and the camp's infamous "camp cobbler" (which you have to be from Arizona to appreciate!). Birthday cake and ice cream topped off the evening.

Also included in the celebration were musical presentations of their favorite camp numbers by past campers and a quiz on the history of the camp. One of the questions on the quiz was to name the first national Summer Crusaders to participate in the ABC Camp program. (The answer: Cindy Cartwright, Sherry Barnhart Van Duyne, Dale Stoffer, and Ron Waters.)

The celebration concluded with comments by the current Brethren pastoral families in Tucson—Rev. Dave and Dawn West of Northwest Chapel and Rev. Bill and Lynne Brady of Tucson First Brethren.

ABC Camp grew from a vision conceived in 1966, when projected growth for Arizona coupled with problems with

(continued on next page)

In Memory

Virginia F. Locke, 89, August 26. Member for 62 years and deaconess at the Maurertown Brethren Church. She also served for many years as president of the Southeastern District Woman's Missionary Society. Mrs. Locke was the widow of Brethren pastor Dr. John F. Locke, who died in 1975. Services by Pastor Richard Craver and Rev. Doc Shank.

Miss Vianna Hackett, 85, August 11. Member for many years of the Calvary Brethren Church (near Quakertown, N.J.), and until recently the sole surviving active member of this congregation. She was present in the worship services of the church until the Sunday before her death. Services by Rev. C. William Cole.

Alfred Morris, 75, August 4. Member for 42 years of the Mt. Olive Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Fredric G. Miller.

Howard E. Winfield, 81, August 3. Longtime member of The Brethren Church in New Lebanon, where he served as a deacon, Sunday school superintendent and teacher, and moderator. He also served on the Ohio District Mission Board and on the Board of Trustees of Ashland University. He was the husband of former National W.M.S. president Pauline Winfield and the father of EVANGELIST Editor Richard Winfield. Services by Rev. James F. Black.

Irene Miller, 94, July 13. Member of the Goshen First Brethren Church. Services by Associate Pastor J. David Kline.

Mary Alice Garman, 77, July 17. Member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church. Services by Rev. Dave Hoyt, Pastor of Youth Discipleship.

Omer C. Lippold, 85, July 11. Member since 1925 of the Loree Brethren Church, where he served as a deacon, Sunday school teacher, choir member, secretary, and treasurer. Services by Pastor James Thomas and Rev. Claude Stogsdill.

(continued from previous page)

the camping facilities the Arizona churches were then using challenged the leadership to look for alternatives in order to enhance the district camping ministry. After initial investigations, it was determined that the best solution was for the district to purchase its own camp property.

In February 1968, Bailey Battiste, chair of the investigating committee, reported that a property near Patagonia was for sale for $7,000. The purchase was approved and backed by a seven-man group and a private lender from Tucson First Brethren. In March the district purchased this 25-acre site in the beautiful mountains of southern Arizona. The following year the national Brethren Youth Crusaders adopted the camp as their project and set a goal of raising $14,000 to assist with the purchase and operation.

Since the early days, when campers slept in tents, to the present, when the camp has dorms, a dining hall, and other buildings, the camping program of the Southwest District has continued to grow under the blessing of the Lord.

— reported by Rev. Bill Brady

Winona McBride, 81, July 11. Member for 67 years of the Bryan First Brethren Church, where she was active for many years in the Woman's Missionary Society and the Ever Ready Sunday school class. Services by Pastor Ray Aspinall.

Aida May Munson, 72, July 6. Member for many years of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, where she was active in the Woman's Missionary Society, the World Relief Sewing group (which she helped to establish in 1966), and the Friday Club. She was the wife of Brethren elder Dr. Charles Munson and mother of two daughters, Bonnie, a member of the Brethren House Team in St. Petersburg, Fla., and Deborah (Vick) of Tusla, Okla. Services by Associate Pastor Randy Saultz.



Daniel Stevens Lightner, 75, July 2. Member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, where he had served as a Sunday school teacher. Services by his son, Rev. Larry Lightner.

Michael Bishop, 48, June 30. Member for 38 years of the Bryan First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Ray Aspinall.

John Szymanowski, 73, June 26. Member of the Pleasant View Brethren Church. Services by Pastor R. Keith Hensley.

Harry Crawford, 77, June 24. Member of the Milledgeville Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Kenneth Sullivan.

Ruth E. Gates, 78, June 24. Longtime member of The Brethren Church, first at the Firestone Park Brethren Church in Akron, where she served as a deaconess and Sunday school teacher, and later at the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, where she also served as a deaconess. Services by longtime friend Rev. Robert Sullivan, assisted by former pastor Rev. Arthur J. Tinkel.

Margaret Hensley, 78, June 21. Member for 44 years of the Mt. Olive Brethren Church, where she also was active in the Woman's Missionary Society. Services by Pastor Fredric G. Miller.

Walter Otis McCann, 85, June 13. Active member for 61 years of the Waterloo First Brethren Church (now the Hammond Avenue Brethren Church), where he served on the Congregational-Ministerial Relations Committee, as Sunday school superintendent, and was faithful in church attendance and in the laymen's organization. He was the father of Brethren pastor Rev. Marlin McCann. Services by Pastor Ronald L. Waters.

Mrs. Martha Dickerhoff, 67, June 7. Lifetime member of the North Manchester First Brethren Church, where she was a teacher for many years, served as president and in other offices of the Hadassah Woman's Missionary Society, sang in the choir, and held numerous other leadership positions. Services by Pastor Marlin McCann.

Loretta Metzger, 84, June 2. Member since 1917 of the Cerro Gordo Brethren Church, where she served as a deaconess. Services by Pastor David Condreay.

Faryl Stuart, 95, April 25. Member since 1907 of the Cerro Gordo Brethren Church. Services by Pastor David Condreay.

Ruth Flynn, 68, March 27. Member of the Milledgeville Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Kenneth Sullivan.

Belva L. Huxtable, 52, March 2. Former member of the Akron Firestone Park Brethren Church. Services by former pastor Rev. Arthur J. Tinkel.

Nathaniel Royce Gates, 85, February 25. Longtime member of The Brethren Church, first at the Akron Firestone Park Brethren Church, where he served as a deacon, Sunday school teacher, and pastor's helper, and later at the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, where he also served as a deacon. Services by longtime friend Rev. Robert Sullivan and by former pastor Rev. Arthur J. Tinkel.

Peace Task Force and Interest Group Being Formed

A Peace Task Force is being formed to promote discussion, reflection, and action on peace-related issues. The Task Force is being organized by Chantal Logan and Jeff Weidenhamer. In addition to the Task Force, which will consist of five members with responsibilities for Task Force activities, other interested Brethren are welcome to join the Peace Interest Group, which will dialogue with Task Force members and discuss peace issues.

Brethren interested in serving on the Task Force or in joining the Interest Group are encouraged to contact Chantal Logan, Rt. 1, Box 26, Bridgewater, VA 22812, or Jeff Weidenhamer, 515 Chestnut St., Ashland, OH 44805.

Goldenaires

Richard and Maryellen Best, 50th, September 24. Members of the Nappanee First Brethren Church.

Woodrow and Marie Milburn, 50th, September 15. Members of the St. James Brethren Church.

Delbert and Romayne Flora, 65th, September 2. Members of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church.

Mace and Annabelle Griffith, 55th, September 2. Members of the St. James Brethren Church.

Max and Winifred Landes, 50th, August 31. Members of the Flora First Brethren Church.

Roy and Wava Amstutz, 50th, August 20. Members of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church.

Herb and Alberta Kridler, 50th, August 14. Members of the Pleasant View Brethren Church.

Rev. Arthur J. and Dorothy Rose Tinkel, 50th, July 19. Members of the Sarver Brethren Church, where Rev. Tinkel serves as pastor.

Weddings

Carolyn Rowland to **Darryl Binkley**, July 30, at the St. James Brethren Church; Pastor Brian H. Moore officiating. Groom a member of the St. James Brethren Church.

Sherri Bowman to **Jonathan Fainter**, July 2, at the Maurertown Brethren Church; Pastor Richard Craver officiating. Bride a member of the Maurertown Brethren Church.

Mindy Wright to **Mark Benton**, April 23, at the North Manchester First Brethren Church; Pastor Marlin McCann officiating. Groom a member of the North Manchester First Brethren Church.

Dominique Yvette Hutchison to **Alan R. Beck**, March 20, at the family home; Rick Koch officiating. Bride a member of the Milledgeville Brethren Church.

New Beginnings, New Opportunities

"Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." Philippians 1:6

September is a time for new beginnings—the kids head back to school and adults return to a more routine lifestyle following the somewhat laid-back atmosphere of summer. The start of this yearly cycle often offers new opportunities for new beginnings.

Many Brethren churches are experiencing new beginnings and the new opportunities that come with them. Passing On the Promise has offered new hope for some congregations that had settled into the routine of status quo. Other congregations are also experiencing revitalization in outreach and in spiritual growth.

Passing on the Promise

The Brethren Church National Office is happy to serve as a resource center for new beginnings—from support to Passing On the Promise churches, to encouragement for churches seeking a pastor, to fresh ideas at the beginning of a new year in youth ministry, to providing curriculum for a new Sunday school year.

We stand ready to help you and your church in this time of new beginnings and new opportunities.

Thank you for standing with us by your financial contributions that make our ministry possible. Your gift for Brethren Church Ministries this month is important, as is your inclusion of The Brethren Church in your 1995 church budget. Thank you for your partnership in the gospel.



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Ashland, OH 44805

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One Memory of a Trip to China

See pages 3 & 4–7.

Seeing God's Hand at Work

A Testimony to God's Faithfulness

By Don Henderson

The following is an open letter given to Pastor Floyd Minor of the Fort Scott, Kans., Brethren Church to be read to the Fort Scott congregation on August 14, 1994. According to Pastor Minor, Don Henderson is a 30-year-old student at a community college in Fort Scott. He recently graduated from the truck-driving course and is now employed as an over-the-road driver.

He comes from a metropolitan area in Michigan, where he was heavily involved in the New Age movement. He had a Christian upbringing, but became disillusioned with Christianity because of inconsistencies he saw in the lives of those around him.

He first attended a morning worship service at the Fort Scott Brethren Church in June, because "something told him that was where he should be." Following that service, he asked to speak to Pastor Minor. This was the first of many such sessions with the pastor and many hours of Bible study and prayer.

Pastor Minor concludes, "Don is committed to God's will for his life and has placed Christ on the throne of his heart. This is just one of the testimonies of the Holy Spirit's work in The Brethren Church today."

Dear Friends,

I would like to start by praising God for all of the miraculous changes he has made in my life over the last few months. I praise Him for His love, for my life, and for the perfect answer to every prayer I've uttered over the last fifteen years. No matter how far I strayed, He never left my side! I know that it is difficult sometimes to see those answers, but I assure you the failure is ours, not His.

I praise Him for His Son, Jesus Christ, by whom we are set free from the bonds of Satan.

I praise Him for the Brethren Church of Ft. Scott, Kansas! You see, I became disillusioned with His Church and walked away some fifteen years ago. But through each and every one of you and the Spirit who moves so visibly throughout this family, He has shown me how truly foolish those fears and apprehensions really were.

I thank all of you for accepting me with such love and openness as to completely strip away my misgivings about the church. I thank you also for the powerful and unwavering prayer-support you've given me. I can't begin to express what a blessing that support is.

I regret that I am not able to join you in worship this morning. I feel like—well, it's like being away from home. I guess I didn't realize it until right now, but being a part of your family makes me feel like I'm at home. Again, I want to thank all of you for making me feel that way.

I hope to be making Ft. Scott my home in the near future, but the Father has some work for me to do, and ultimately, that decision is in His hands. I trust His wisdom beyond any doubt, so if He has other plans, I am sure they are in my best interest as well as His.

Regardless of what those decisions may be in the long run, I know in my heart that I have work remaining in Ft. Scott. So as soon as is possible, I'll be dropping in to share with you all in praising and worshiping His name. Until then, I'll be remembering you all in my thoughts and prayers.

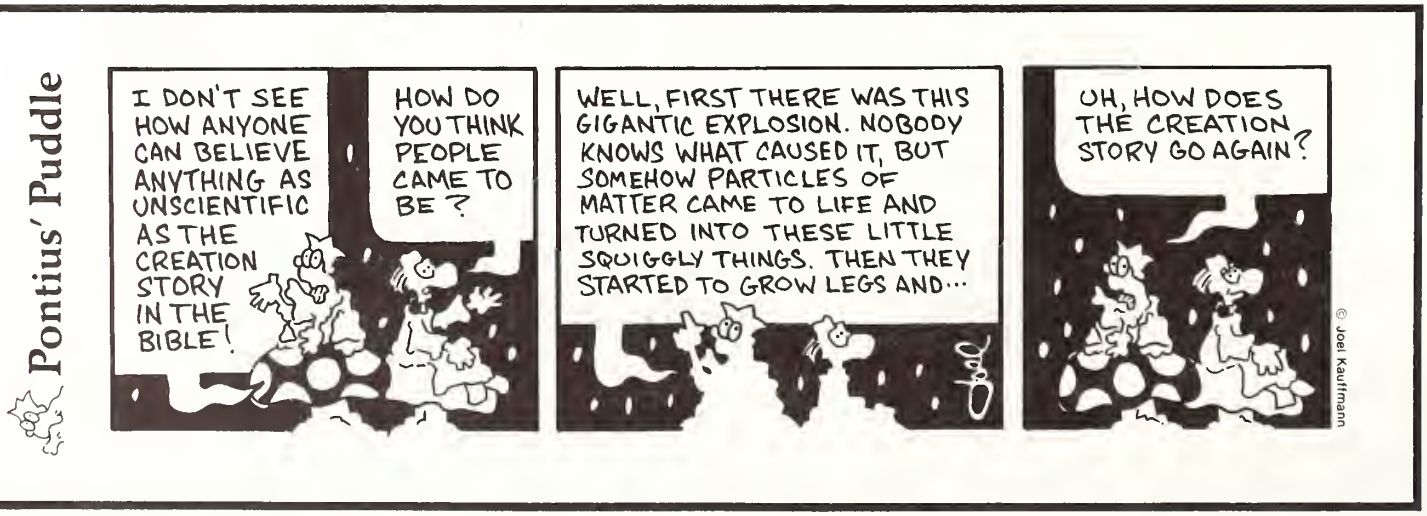
Please continue to support the work the Father brings into my life with your prayers.

May God bless and strengthen each of you!

Until we meet again.

Your brother in Jesus,

Don Henderson



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Cover

For Editor Dick Winfield and his wife, Kitty, the buildings on the cover became a familiar sight this summer, for the buildings were located on the campus of Guangdong College of Education in Guangzhou, China, where the Winfields spent five weeks. The contrast between the small structure (built out over a pond) in the foreground with its traditional Chinese roof, and the nine-story classroom behind it (where the Winfields taught English classes) is symbolic of the many contrasts the Winfields saw while in China. See the article, "How Was Your Trip to China?" on the next four pages for details.

Answers to the Little Crusader page:

The Bible verse should read, "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen."

Some ways you could grow stronger in Christ are by reading the Bible, by obeying God's word, by memorizing Scripture verses, by going to Sunday school and church, by praying, and by telling others about Jesus.

"How Was Your Trip To China?"

By Richard C. Winfield, Editor

"HOW WAS YOUR TRIP to China?" This is a question my wife and I have heard numerous times since we returned on August 11 from our five weeks in that country. It's a question we've welcomed, because we enjoy talking about our experience there.

But before answering that question, perhaps I should answer some other questions that may be running through your mind, such questions as: "When did you go to China?" "Why did you go?" "What did you do there?"

Background

My wife, Kitty, and I entered China by train from Hong Kong on July 4 (a different, but exciting, way to spend the Fourth of July!), and left on August 9. We went there under the auspices of a U.S.-based, non-denominational organization that recruits American and Canadian Christians to teach English in Chinese educational institutions.

We went to China to teach English, but as Christians we also went to bear witness by our lives (and by our words, when opportunities arose) to our faith in Jesus Christ. We financed this short-term special ministry with personal funds, with assistance from family and friends.*

We were two members of a team of eight American teachers who were assigned to Guangdong College of Education in the city of Guangzhou (Canton) in southern China, about 90 miles from Hong Kong. Our students were all adults who knew English. In fact, all but a few were English teachers who taught at the junior high, high school, or college level in Chinese schools.

**I also want to acknowledge with thanks the contribution of the General Conference Executive Committee, which allowed me time away from the office in order to make this trip to China.*



Dick (right) with his class, all but one of whom were English teachers. The woman standing at the back of the room is the dean of the foreign language department of the college, who supervised the summer English program.

Kitty had a class of 16 students, and I had a class of 12, to whom we taught a four-week intensive English reading and writing course. For many of our students, it was the first time they had ever had a class that was taught all in English.

While at the school, Kitty and I stayed in a building (known as the Experts Apartments!) where guest lecturers and visitors to the school are housed. The other six members of our team occupied three other apartments in the building. Our team ate meals together in a guest dining room in the school dining hall, where we were served very good meals.

With that much background, let me return to the question we've been asked so often: "How was your trip to China?"

Interesting

First of all, it was interesting—there was so much new to see and experience. Our first impression of China was of the lush green countryside. We were in southern China, which is in the tropics. Guangzhou is on the same latitude as the northern part of Cuba, so it was very warm. It was also humid, with a lot of rain.

Our second impression was of construction. It seemed that everywhere we looked something was being built—roads, bridges, overpasses ("flyovers" as they call them), the railway bed, and especially buildings—high-rise apartment houses and many-storied office buildings. As one of our teacher's aids said, "China is a land under construction." We were particularly intrigued by the bamboo scaffolding that completely surrounds the tall buildings as they are under construction.

We also found so much that was interesting about the Chinese people: where they live; how they live; what they eat; problems they face. We learned, for example, that most of the people in that area lived not in individual houses but in high-

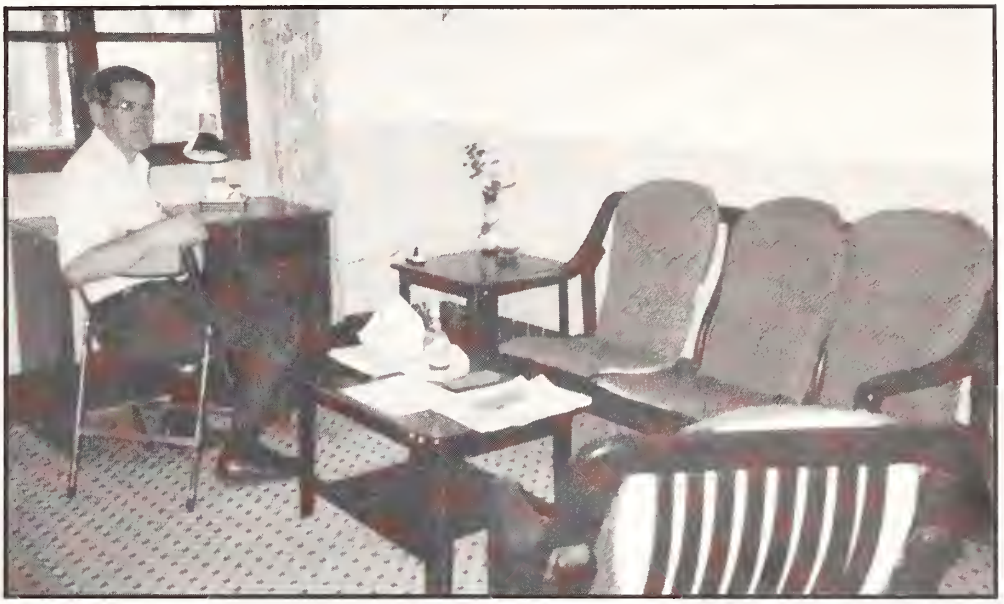
"Of China's 1.2 billion people, these 75 to 80 million Christians represent only 6 1/4 to 6 2/3 percent. In fact, the **non-Christian population** *of China is at least four times the* **total population** *of the United States.*

rise apartment buildings (which is why so many of them are under construction).

A side note on this: Our Chinese students were quite surprised to learn that our unmarried, 23-year-old daughter (a nurse) lives in an apartment by herself. For them, this was unheard of. Due to the shortage of apartments, unmarried sons and daughters live with their parents, even if they are financially independent. In fact, they often have to live with parents even after they are married.

My wife's teacher's aid and her husband (a lawyer), for instance, are living with her parents while they wait for an apartment to become available. But not only they, for her brother, his wife, and their three-year-old daughter also share that same modest-sized apartment!

These are just a few of the many things we found so interesting on our trip to China.



The living room of our apartment, which also had a bedroom, small kitchen (which we didn't use since we ate our meals in a dining hall), and bathroom. The apartment had air conditioning (a real blessing in that hot climate!), a television set (which we seldom watched, since most programs were in Chinese), a phone (from which we made several calls to the U.S.), and a small washing machine.

Eye-opening

How was our trip to China? It was also eye-opening. Our eyes were opened to what a large country it is! We didn't see China, only one tiny part of it. We didn't even get within a thousand miles of Beijing or the Great Wall.

When we saw Guangzhou's busy streets, got stuck in its traffic, or walked through its busy department stores, our eyes were also opened to China's teeming population. And yet Guangzhou's five million or so people are just a drop in the bucket to China's nearly 1.2 billion people—about 4½ times the population of the United States in a land area only two percent larger than that of the entire U.S.

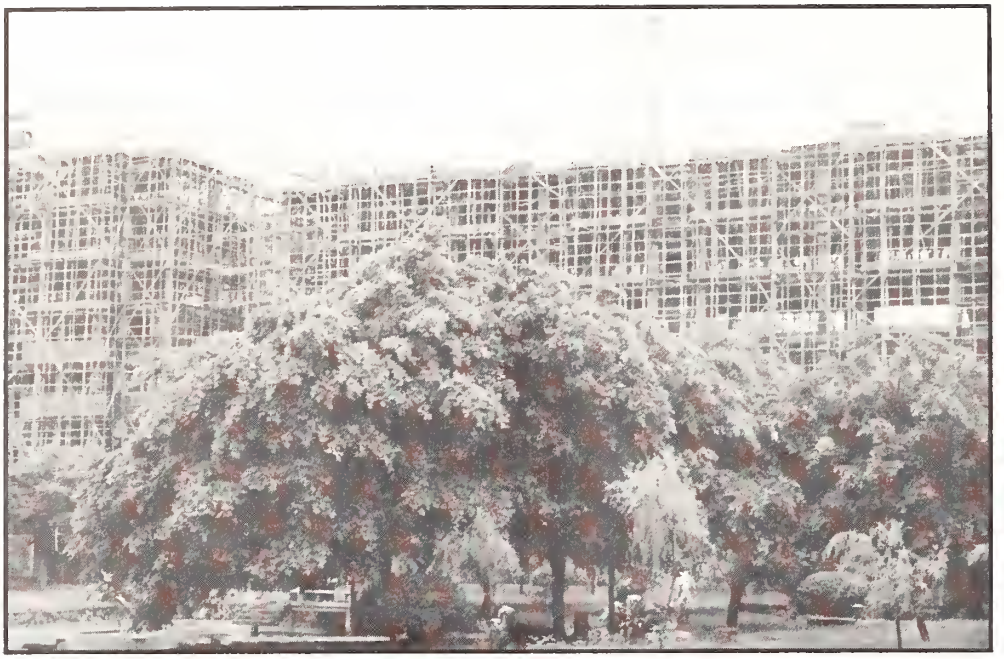
Our eyes were also opened to the contrasts that exist in that country. Guangzhou is a large city with many modern conveniences. We saw modern department stores full of merchandise, luxury hotels, copy centers, people wearing beepers and talking on cellular phones. But on the train-ride between Guangzhou and Hong Kong, we saw men plowing with water buffaloes and women doing farm work by hand.

Even Guangzhou itself is a strange mixture of the modern and the traditional. In addition to the clean, modern department stores, there are also dusty street markets. One of the most incongruous things we saw was a man talking on a cellular phone while riding in a cart on the back of a bicycle!

Bicycles are a common mode of transportation, since very few people in China own cars. This also resulted in some eye-opening scenes. We saw people all dressed up, riding bicycles to work. Women riding



Kitty (6th from the left) and her students, with a classroom building behind them. Our classes met on the sixth floor of this nine-story building.



Everywhere we looked in China we saw construction. This apartment building for faculty and staff was being constructed on the Guangdong College of Education campus. Notice the bamboo scaffolding that surrounds the building.

bicycles wearing nice dresses (we could never understand how they kept them so clean!), hose, high heels, and hats were a common sight. On the other hand, Guangzhou also has plenty of public transportation—lots of buses (even some double-decker ones) and thousands of taxis.

Frustrating

How was our trip to China? At times it was frustrating. We were frustrated by our inability to talk to people and our inability to read anything—signs, billboards, or sometimes even the words on restroom doors!

Whenever we got off the college campus, we found very few people who understood any English. And our Chinese is even worse (which is to say, nonexistent). Thus we were frustrated in our desire to talk to the man (or woman) on the street. Talking to clerks in stores was also a problem (except in the large department stores, where some of them knew English).

It is surprising, however, how much you *can* communicate by using signs and gestures, especially if you learn to be patient. On the other hand, even with those who spoke English, communication seemed to break down at the most inopportune times.

Another source of frustration was our less-than-ideal teaching conditions. As I've mentioned, the weather was hot and humid, so our classrooms were very warm. Fortunately, the rooms had windows on two sides, so we could get cross ventilation. But sometimes it was too breezy, and a few times the rooms were like wind tunnels! Furthermore, along with the breezes came traffic noise from the busy streets nearby as well as sounds from the classrooms next door.

It was hard enough for the students to understand our English and for us to understand their accents. But these conditions made it worse. Sometimes we would think, "If I could only have these students in a nice quiet room for awhile, how much more we could accomplish!"

Rewarding

But along with the frustrations, we also found our trip to China to be very rewarding. In spite of the less than ideal classroom conditions, our students did learn. Their ability to speak, read, and write English improved during the four-week course. This is the kind of reward that every teacher appreciates.

In addition, our students were so eager to learn and so appreciative of our efforts that it was a joy to teach. And what a blessing it was to get to know them personally! Before we left, our classes took us out to eat at a restaurant, took photographs and gave us copies, and presented us with gifts (both gifts from the class as a whole and from some individuals in the class). We treasure the memory of our times with them as well as the gifts they gave us. But even more rewarding to us is remembering their comment, "You have been so kind to us"; their other words of appreciation; and the tears that were shed on our final day together.

Humbling

Our trip to China was also a humbling experience. Being treated so royally by our students was part of that abasement. Here were people who have so much less than we have taking us out to eat and giving us gifts.

We were also humbled (embarrassed might be a better word) at how little we knew about China, its history, culture, literature, etc. Even the fact that we didn't know Chinese was itself humbling. We were teaching people who knew our language; but we didn't know any of theirs.

Another humbling thing was seeing how long-suffering the Chinese people are. We Americans are so prone to complain about the slightest inconvenience. I mentioned earlier the frustrations we experienced in our classrooms—the heat, the wind, the noise. The students had to put up with these things too, but they seemed to take them in stride. At times they even seemed to be oblivious to them.

It was also humbling when we compared their standard of living with ours. Most Chinese people don't even dream of attaining a style of life that most of us take for granted. They entertain no hope of owning a house in the suburbs surrounded by grass. They only aspire to a larger apartment in a nicer apartment building. Only one of my students had a motorcycle (the rest had bicycles), and they didn't ever expect to own a car.

Sobering

Our trip to China was also sobering. This was the first time in my life that I had been in a country where the vast majority of people claim no religion.

On the positive side, we attended a church in Guangzhou on our first

Sunday in the city. It had been a Southern Baptist Church but was now nondenominational. It is one of the official churches allowed by the Chinese government (as opposed to the underground house churches, which are not). Approximately 600 people filled the large sanctuary—people of all ages, not just old people as I expected. In fact, if anything people from approximately 18 to 30 were in the majority.

I was blessed by worshiping with this group of believers, even though I couldn't understand the service, which was entirely in Chinese. I particularly enjoyed the hymns. These were sung to hymn tunes which we knew, and we were given hymnals that had the English words. So as they sang in Chinese, we sang along in English. While humanly speaking there was a confusion of languages, I'm sure the Lord was able to sort it out! I also enjoyed the choir, made up mainly of young adults, who presented an enthusiastic special number.

Being a part of that service was a blessed experience, and I am thankful for that church. But it is one of only a few official churches and approximately 60 house congregations in Guangzhou, a metropolitan area with an estimated population of more than five million people! These are sobering statistics. (By comparison, Ashland County has at least 65 churches serving a population of only 47,500.)

It is impossible to *know* how many Christians there are in China, since the majority of them worship in house churches. Some estimates put the figure at 60 million, and recently I read a report that put it as high as 75 to 80 million.

That sounds great, and we are certainly thankful for these 75 to 80 million believers. But when we compare these figures with the total population of China, the result is sobering indeed. Of China's 1.2 billion people, these 75 to 80 million Christians represent only 6¼ to 6⅔ percent. In fact, the *non-Christian population* of China is at least four times the *total population* of the United States.

On the personal level, we encountered little apparent interest in spiritual things among our students, although some interest began to surface by the end of the four weeks. As far as we learned, only one or two of our students attend a church.

So while we had an interesting and rewarding trip to China, it was also a sobering time as we faced these stark spiritual realities.

Disappointing

Our trip to China was also in one respect a little disappointing. We had looked forward to the opportunity for spending time individually with our students in order to get to know them personally and perhaps to have a chance to talk about spiritual matters. But our teaching was so demanding and so many other activities were scheduled that our opportunities to meet one-on-one were very limited.

One reason for this was that our team was one of two that introduced a new English course in the summer program this year. While we had a textbook, we did not have a teacher's guide, so we spent a lot of time planning lessons. In addition, because it was in part a writing course, we spent hours reading and grading the writing assignments and essays of our students. This used up a lot of the time that we had hoped to spend chatting with the students, during which we could have talked about serious matters of life and faith.

Nevertheless, our hope and prayer is that we—and the nearly 200 other teachers from our sending agency and the hundreds of Christian teachers from similar agencies that were teaching in China this past summer—have, by our lives and our words, planted seeds that will take root and grow in the lives of numerous Chinese people, bringing them to faith in Jesus Christ.

Enticing

Finally, our trip to China was enticing. We got just enough of a taste of China that we hope to return. China is closed to missionaries, but the Chinese government still welcomes teachers. And teachers *can* have a lasting influence. Soon after we began teaching, a student said to one of our team members, "You are so kind. You remind me of another foreign teacher I had. He was a Christian."

How was our trip to China? It was interesting, eye-opening, frustrating, rewarding, humbling, sobering, disappointing, and enticing. In short, it was great!

Perhaps this report of our experience has enticed you to consider short-term Christian ministry opportunities. If your heart has been stirred, consider China. Then you too will have the joy of responding to the question, "How was your trip to China?" [⇧]



What a blessing it was to worship on July 10 with approximately 600 other people at this church in the heart of Guangzhou!

A Quiz on the Progressive Brethren

By Matthew W. Hamel

Welcome to the second in this series of quizzes on Brethren history! In this month's quiz, we will be taking a tour of the events that led to the formation of our branch of the Brethren family tree—The Brethren Church.

AS BRETHREN in America in the late 19th century became more aware of American society, tensions began to build between those in the church who advocated adapting to changes in society and those who were opposed to new ideas. Those who were willing to adapt to society were known as Progressives. Who were these Progressives, and how did they influence The Brethren Church? For answers to these questions, read on.

1. A source of contention among the Brethren as they approached the 1880s was:
Indoor baptistries. Go to 9.
Higher education. Go to 28.

2. From very early in their history, Brethren met on a yearly basis for fellowship and to conduct the business of the church. These Annual Meetings were similar to our General Conference, with plenty of time for Christian fellowship and for coming to consensus about matters of faith and practice. In response to the growing variety of opinions on some issues (such as those already discussed), Annual Meeting decisions on matters in dispute were made binding on all members of the church. This included decisions concerning:
Dress. Go to 4.
Beards. Go to 30.

Mr. Hamel, a member of the Johnstown, Pa., Second Brethren Church, is a 1993 graduate of Ashland Theological Seminary with a degree in church history. He has spent the past year researching Brethren history, which has included doing several genealogical searches. If interested in his genealogical services, you may contact him in care of the EVANGELIST.



This man played a leading role in the establishment of The Brethren Church. Do you know his name? See question 7.

3. Correct! Holsinger's knack for the publishing business enabled him to acquire another Progressive paper, Stephen Bashor's *Gospel Preacher,* in June of 1882. The following year the combined magazine was renamed *The Brethren's Evangelist.* Press on to 31.

4. Yes! Members had always been encouraged to wear plain dress (cf. 1 Peter 3:3). But the influence of newer styles led to stricter guidelines. Jump ahead to 30, then backtrack to 25.

5. You're rushing things a bit. Like most conservative groups, the Brethren resisted changes in their worship traditions. But the use of gospel songs (Christian music that puts more focus on human emotions) did not become an issue until later. Take a look at 22.

6. The new Brethren Church was quick to organize groups for women and youth. One of the first auxiliary organizations formed was:
The S.S.C.E. Go to 20.
The Y.P.S.C.E.B.C. Go to 8.

7. The most outspoken supporter of the Progressive cause was:
Henry R. Holsinger. Go to 14.
Stephen H. Bashor. Go to 32.

8. No, this group came later. It's name was (Are you ready for this?) the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor of the Brethren Church (whew!). It was an arm of the nationwide Christian Endeavor movement, an interfaith youth fellowship. Cruise on to 13.

9. No, indoor baptistries were not a divisive issue. Even so, the "Old Order" branches of the Brethren continue to baptize outdoors in all kinds of weather. Shiver on to 15.

10. Another group was dissatisfied with the mandatory decisions of Annual Meeting. Because of their ready acceptance of new ideas, the Brethren in this broad-minded faction of the church were called "fast."
True. Go to 24.
False. God to 19.

11. Not exactly. Try 36 instead.

12. Correct. Religious instruction was considered to be the responsibility of parents in the home. Some saw Sunday schools as a threat to the closeness of the nuclear and extended family. Rewind to 2.

13. After a few years of indecision, the Brethren resolved in 1892 to hold Conferences annually so that concerns of the fellowship could be addressed quickly. It was resolved that the site of these Conferences should be Ashland, Ohio.
True. Go to 35.
False. Go to 29.

14. Right on! In his magazines,

the *Christian Family Companion* and *The Progressive Christian*, Holsinger regularly criticized the decisions of Annual Meeting. Journey on to 18.

15. Another issue was extended revival services or "protracted meetings." These were criticized for several reasons. One of these was:

That they encouraged emotional decisions for Christ. Go to 17.

That "gospel songs" were used. Go to 5.

16. You're correct. The Progressives believed that the Annual Meeting system was not scriptural. They thought that the legalistic attitude of those in power conflicted with the spirit and intent of the Bible. Swing on over to 33.

17. You're right! These services were held by traveling evangelists and sometimes lasted several weeks. The emotional appeals for conversion were seen by some as a threat to the Brethren emphasis on discipleship and on "counting the cost" (cf. Luke 14:25–33). Move on to 22.

18. An effective writer and publisher, Holsinger used his magazines as platforms from which to debate those in the "Old Order" and moderate camps. After discontinuing the *Christian Family Companion* in 1873, he began *The Progressive Christian* in 1878. This magazine later became:

The *Messenger*. Go to 21.

The Brethren Evangelist. Go to 3.

19. Oops! Try 24 instead.

20. Good choice! The Sisters' Society of Christian Endeavor was begun by resolution of the 1887 Convention and eventually became the Woman's Missionary Society. Head back to 8 and then on to 13.

21. You're in the wrong pew. This is the magazine of the Church of the Brethren. Hop on down to 31.

22. Sunday schools were also resisted by some groups in the church because of:

Inadequate funds for Christian education. Go to 34.

Fears of weakening the family. Go to 12.

23. Correct. This convention was held in the original Founder's Hall on the Ashland College campus. The Brethren adopted a "Declaration of Principles" in which they set forth their platform and expressed their grievances against the church. They did not officially organize, however, wanting to allow one last opportunity for reconciliation at the Annual Meeting in May 1883. Swing by 27, then go on to 6.

24. Right! These "fast" Brethren favored keeping up with society in order to broaden the church's mission. This "fast" group of Progressives were at one extreme and the "Old Orders" were at the other. Between them was a large group of moderates (often called "Conservatives"), who later became the Church of the Brethren. Now back to 7.

25. Passage and enforcement of Annual Meeting decisions did little to calm the unrest within the denomination as it approached the 1880s. Sunday schools and colleges were finally approved, but this upset a large faction of the more traditional Brethren, known as:

The "Slow" Brethren. Go to 11.

The "Old Orders." Go to 36.

26. Sorry! This was a Progressive motto, but not the one adopted at the meeting at Schoolhouse No. 7. As this motto suggests, the Progressives believed that on matters not strictly prohibited by Scripture, individual freedom of choice should be allowed rather than the strict uniformity required by the other Brethren groups. Continue on to 33.

27. Not so fast! The **second** convention of The Brethren Church was held at Dayton in 1883. At this 1883 convention, a new and separate Brethren Church was officially organized. Take a look at 23, then go way back to 6.

28. Good job! Schooling beyond the elementary level was considered prideful and a sign of vain worldliness. Jump back to 15.

29. Correct. Read 35, then leapfrog to 37.

30. A near miss! Beards, while encouraged, were never mandatory, except for those in the eldership. It is of interest that Brethren, like other anabaptist groups, discouraged men from wearing mustaches (especially without a beard), since this was associated with those in the military. Now trim back to 25.

31. Henry Holsinger ran afoul of Annual Meeting because of his constant agitation for progress, and he was expelled on the first day of the 1882 Annual Meeting. Following that day's emotionally-charged sessions, Holsinger's supporters held an evening meeting at nearby Schoolhouse No. 7. During this meeting and one held the next day, the Progressive perspective was formulated and a motto was adopted. That motto, which is still used today, was:

"The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible." Go to 16.

"In essentials unity, in nonessentials liberty, in all things charity." Go to 26.

32. Sorry, wrong man. But Bashor could be called "the most outspoken supporter of revival meetings," since he claimed to have brought about the conversion of 10,000 people through special meetings between 1874 and 1882. A memorial on the campus of Ashland Theological Seminary honors Bashor for his work as a "Pioneer Evangelist." Have a look at 14.

33. The first convention of the Progressive Brethren was held June 29–30, 1882, at:

Dayton, Ohio. Go to 27.

Ashland, Ohio. Go to 23.

34. Whoops! See 12.

35. No, Conferences were not limited to Ashland. They were also held in various other places, including Warsaw, Ind. (1892, 1893); Eagle Lake, Ind. (1896); Johnstown, Pa. (1897); and Winona Park, Ind. (1899); just to mention those held before 1990. Head on down to 37.

36. Correct. This group was concentrated in southwestern Ohio, near Dayton, a center of "Old Order" activity to this day. Now jump way back to 10.

37. Done at last! Congratulations on finishing this quiz on the beginnings of The Brethren Church. [✝]



Understanding the Bible

"The Bible Says . . ." Literalism in Biblical Interpretation

By Brian H. Moore

IF YOU have been following the articles in this series on "Understanding the Bible," you may be asking, "Why all this bother about how to interpret the Bible? Why not just read it, believe it, obey it, and grow from it? Does one have to be a scholar to understand the Bible?"

Well, you have asked a lot of questions all at once! Slow down a bit, and I will try to explain why we are doing this series.

Why we are doing this series

FIRST, the Bible itself, in most instances, does not tell us how to interpret its message. Sometimes the writer or speaker will say that this is a parable or a story or that certain exotic characters represent specific people or nations. But the Bible as a whole does not contain its own interpretive notes. (*That's why we have so many study Bibles!*)

In fact, when the Bible's authors were writing down their messages, they did not know that they were writing "for the Bible." Each was writing for his time, his place, and his circumstance. So all of the books of the Bible cannot be read in the same way. Each must be interpreted in light of the situation in which and for which it was written.

SECOND, since the books of the Bible were written so long ago and in such far away (from us) places, it is not easy just to read and understand their messages. To think that we could do so assumes that the people of the Bible were all just like us, living in a world like ours, thinking the way we think, living the way we live. But we know that isn't true! *We* don't even live in the world we used to live in, think the way we used to think, live the way we once lived. Just in our lifetimes life has changed dramatically. Imagine how much more it has changed in the span of 2,000 or even 4,000 years! To interpret the Bible correctly, we must try to bridge this gap of time and distance.

THIRD, the questions you have raised overlook something very important: everyone comes to the Bible with what we might call pre-understandings. These are ideas we have before we begin reading the Bible. We cannot avoid coming to the Bible with these ideas because pre-understandings are part of who we are and how we think. Even your questions indicate certain pre-understandings (namely, that the Bible is simple, everyone can understand it, etc.). Even people who begin reading the Bible for the first time bring some kind of pre-understanding to it.

What we are trying to do through this series of articles is to help us isolate some of our pre-understandings, to examine them, and to align them with our Brethren heritage. Brethren people should have Brethren pre-understandings.

Literal versus allegorical

One of the issues facing anyone who would read the Bible and try to understand its message is the question of literalism. (This is true of reading anything!) Does what we are reading mean simply and plainly what it says? Are all words and ideas to be taken at "face value"?

Years ago in the history of the church, some teachers and scholars took the opposite approach—that the Bible almost never means what it simply says. They believed that all the stories, teachings, prophecies, poems, and riddles mean something much different from what they plainly say. This is called allegorizing. Allegorizing attaches fanciful meanings to the simplest of accounts.

It is true that the Bible contains allegories (such as the vine and the branches). But allegorizing as an interpretive method is questionable because in its excessive use of the imagination, it finds meanings the author never intended.

Problems of literalism

Our concern here, however, is with the opposite extreme: literalism. Literalism errs by *not* finding the author's intended meaning because of adhering too closely to the "face value" of the words he uses.

"Do you take the Bible literally?" someone might ask.

"Yes, I do," I would answer.

"Does every word, then, mean exactly what it says?"

"No, I don't think so," I would reply.

No one is an absolute literalist. No one takes every word or image and attaches an unimaginative direct meaning to it. Does God have feathers and wings? If Jesus is the vine, do we pick grapes from Him? If Christians are salt, have you seen one lately? No one is so naive as to suppose that everything in the Bible is strictly literal.

The problem arises, however, in deciding what is literal and what is figurative. Many conservative Christians would rather err on the side of being strictly literal, but sometimes serious questions arise because we have tried to be too staunchly

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"In our concern for faithfulness to the words of Scripture, we may miss the point the author is trying to make—with the result that we are not faithful to the meaning *of Scripture."*

literal. In our concern for faithfulness to the words of Scripture, we may miss the point the author is trying to make—with the result that we are not faithful to the *meaning* of Scripture.

Literalism becomes a problem when, in our uncompromising adherence to the sacredness of Scripture, we are afraid to "take a chance" that the author might have meant something other than the obvious. We would never want to be guilty of twisting the meaning of a passage, so we stick to the words rather than explore the possibility that the author may have meant something different from the obvious.

Literalism as an escape

Literalism is also a problem if it is employed as an escape from the hard work of interpretation. If literalism is a shortcut, an avenue of least resistance, a hurried attempt to find meaning, then it is suspect.

For example, literalism makes short work of the place of women in ministry by appealing to this text: "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak . . . it is a shame for women to speak in the church" (1 Corinthians 14:34, 35). This passage may or may not apply to women in ministry. But does anyone take these words in an absolutely literal sense?

Literalism also becomes a problem when it is used selectively in order to fit some parts of a passage into one's hidden (or not so hidden) theological system. This idea relates to the concept of pre-understanding. If our pre-understanding is a closed theological system, we may find ourselves adjusting Scripture to fit our system rather than allowing Scripture to reframe our theological framework. Literalism then becomes the servant of our preconceptions.

Literalism is also a problem if our belief in it causes us to become dogmatic or even arrogant, an arrogance born of oversimplification. (*I must add that there is an arrogance born of over-complication as well!*) There is a dogmatic spirit revealed when someone says, "The Bible says . . . ," in order to answer all questions and put all disputes to rest. To say, "The Bible says . . . ," does not answer the question of what the Bible *means*! (Which gets back to those first questions you asked me.)

Oh, yes! You asked me another question: "Does one have to be a scholar to understand the Bible?" Of course not! A simple plowboy can open the Bible and understand most of what it says, because the Bible is to be read and understood like any other book. At the same time, the more we know about the Bible, the better we can understand it and appreciate its richness. (Let me add here that sometimes literalism takes a wonderfully rich tapestry of meaning and manages to make it drab!)

Suggestions to guide us

So, let me conclude by making a few suggestions to guide us between "the rock" of extreme literalism and "the hard place" of fanciful spiritualization of the text.

FIRST, remember the context. Consider the sentences that surround the passage under consideration. Consider the entire book in which the passage occurs. Consider the Bible as a whole, because, for all its variety, it is remarkably consistent.

SECOND, try to bridge the gap between times and cultures. Remember that many years and many miles have made a great difference in people's thinking and perceptions (especially ours!). If missionaries experience "culture shock" even within the same time frame when they go far away, how much more must we work hard to understand people from both long ago and far away.

THIRD, try to identify the class of literature under consideration. We do this automatically every day as we read novels, the comics, news reports, poetry, etc. So we need to take note of what we are studying; is it a letter, a hymn, a parable, or an apocalypse? Each is to be understood according to its own classification.

FOURTH, be aware of any vivid or unusual uses of language. This may be a clue that you should understand the verse or passage in a figurative rather than a literal way. Understanding types of literature helps here, too. For example, poetry has more figurative language than stories do.

FIFTH, note where the passage is in the light of God's unfolding revelation. The New Testament builds upon the Old. Christ is the zenith of all revelation (Heb. 1:1–2). Some things in the Bible are pre-Christian and must be understood in that light. To ignore this principle is to try to apply everything literally to this age and our lives—which is impossible to do.

SIXTH, struggle to find the author's intention. If he didn't mean that *then*, it doesn't mean that *now*. To ignore this guideline enables one to make the Bible say just about anything one wishes it to say.

Did I answer your questions? I hope this helps us to broaden our approach to the Bible and to come to know its Author better. And most of all, I hope it helps us to follow Him faithfully in life. [✞]

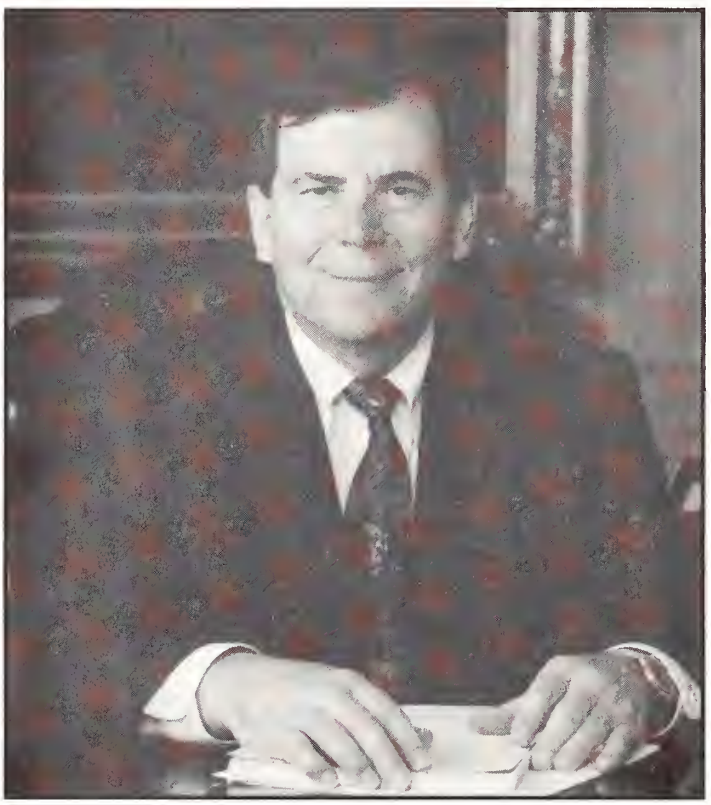
Correspondence Welcomed

The members of the General Conference Executive Council's Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication invite readers to suggest topics or Bible passages to discuss in future articles in this column. Send questions, comments, or suggestions to the committee in care of The Brethren Evangelist, 524 College Ave., Ashland, OH 44805.

Preparing Ashland University For the Next Century

By G. William Benz

THE LAST DECADE has been a remarkable one for Ashland University. Using almost any index or measurement, Ashland has enjoyed a great deal of success. Here are a few examples that illustrate how well the University is doing.



Dr. G. William Benz, President of Ashland University

Signs of success

- Enrollment at both the undergraduate and graduate level has continued to rise. Currently we have more than 5,500 students studying at the University, including 1,830 undergraduates on the Ashland campus and more than 600 enrolled in the Seminary.
- Financially, each year the institution gets healthier and healthier. The endowment has risen from $2 million in the early 1980's to over $20 million today.
- Budgets continue to be balanced each year and, in fact, often have significant surpluses. The annual budget increased from $12 million to $52 million in the last decade.
- The long-term debt of the University has decreased steadily each year until it is at the point of being only six percent of the total annual budget.
- The physical facilities of the University are in very good condition, and the campus is certainly among the most beautiful in the State of Ohio.
- We will soon begin construction on a new 52,000-square-foot Student Center that will enable us to meet the needs of all our students for many years into the future.
- Recent additions to our faculty and staff have improved the quality of what was already an exceptionally skilled and dedicated group of people, thoroughly committed to teaching, scholarship, support of students, and service.

One thing lacking

It was evident to me when I arrived on the Ashland University campus that this was a university poised to become a major leader in higher education for this entire region. One thing lacking, however, was the existence of any significant long-range planning. What was needed was the creation of a *process*, which would include all campus constituencies, and which would give shape to a common vision for the University—a vision that would be translated into goals, objectives, timelines, and schedules for implementation. In other words, preparing Ashland University for the next century.

Ashland Theological Seminary was the clear exception. It was the one component of the University which, for several years, had been actively involved in strategic planning.

Beginning in 1989, the Seminary faculty, students, and staff undertook serious analysis of the mission, goals, and objectives of the Seminary and then developed a set of strategies for implementing the mission and accomplishing those goals. These plans have been reviewed yearly and have provided a means by which the Seminary is able to make the adjustments in its curriculum and programs necessary to maintain both fidelity to its mission and the capability to respond to changing circumstances and needs.

Starting last year, the rest of the University also embarked upon a comprehensive strategic planning process. This planning effort will ask serious questions about who and what we are, what we would like to be in the future, and what are the best means to achieve our goals.

A Strategic Planning Commit-

"Personally, I would hope that this university will be the kind of institution that every young person growing up in the Brethren Church will carefully consider when choosing the place for his or her college education."

tee was appointed to begin the formal process of developing this planning strategy. Dr. Ruth Person, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Dr. Lucille Ford, Executive Assistant to the President, were asked to chair this committee and to orchestrate the planning process. Nine special Task Forces have been formed under the auspices of the Strategic Planning Committee dealing with all aspects of university life, ranging from the curriculum to student affairs.

More than 120 people were selected from the various campus constituencies to meet through the spring and summer months of 1994 to analyze and assess the current situation in their particular area and to look at what ought to be the future goals and objectives. This fall, an outside consultant visited the campus and met with the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees and the Strategic Planning Committee. This consultant provided further insight and counsel regarding how best to move the planning process along and make it as successful as possible. The goal is to have reports ready by next summer so that, during the fall of the 1995–96 academic year, the various governing bodies and constituencies can act on these recommendations and implement them as quickly as possible.

A position of strength

What makes this planning exciting for all of us in the community is that its origins lie not in a particular crisis or out of the necessity of a difficult enrollment or financial situation. Ashland University is doing well! *But the best time to do systematic planning for the future is when things are going well, not when things are in a crisis mode.* You can plan much better from a position of strength than from one of weakness.

All of us recognize that the instability of the external environments around us—demographic trends, the uncertain economic future, the increasing cost of private higher education, and a host of other concerns—complicates the future of institutions such as Ashland University.

A painful lesson

This was brought painfully to our attention this year, when Congress passed the Crime Bill, which included a cessation of all Federal Pell Grants to incarcerated students. Ashland University receives almost $2 million in such grants. The loss of this revenue will force us to cut back considerably on our program offerings at the two prison sites, although we plan to maintain the programs at a reduced level using the funding that still comes to us from the State of Ohio.

This unforeseen circumstance serves as an excellent illustration of the importance of planning. Although you cannot always predict what is going to happen, careful and thoughtful planning makes it possible to make tough choices and allocate available resources in a framework of goals and objectives that has emerged from consensus decision-making and careful analysis.

One important focus of the strategic planning process will be to examine all of our educational programs and services in terms of the University's Mission Statement. Last year in THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST, I mentioned how important this mission has historically been at Ashland and how vital a role it ought to play in helping to shape the nature and content of our future. All of us who are a part of the Ashland community want to do better than we have done in the past in terms of making sure that our students are challenged academically and that they develop the competencies and skills which will enable them to be prepared to live useful and productive lives.

We also want them to gain from their years on this campus a clear sense of values that is firmly rooted in the Judeo-Christian tradition, and also an appreciation for the importance of service and commitment to others. I would like to see Ashland known as a distinctive institution that takes seriously the *intellectual, spiritual, physical,* and *emotional development* of all of our students—undergraduate and graduate—for the entire time they are with us.

Personally, I would hope that this university will be the kind of institution that every young person growing up in the Brethren Church will carefully consider when choosing the place for his or her college education. Ashland University, like Ashland Theological Seminary, ought to become the institution of choice for a larger number of Brethren young people. We hope that the readers of THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST will help make that a reality.

An exciting time

This is a very exciting time in the history of Ashland University. For many years, this institution has been a life-changing place for thousands of men and women. But now, more than ever before, Ashland has the potential to provide students with quality educational programs that are diverse and challenging, an environment that is very supportive and stimulating, and a value system which is based on and explicitly reflects Christian principles.

We thank each of you for your continued expressions of support that have helped make this a reality, and we earnestly solicit your prayers on behalf of the mission of this university and for its future success. [⇧]

Testimonies to Fruit-Bearing On the Ashland University Campus

A FAMILIAR question asks, "How many apples can be grown from a single seed?" It doesn't take a mathematician to realize that the possibilities are infinite. How many lives can be touched through the life of one university student? How far-reaching is the investment of prayers, support, and gifts shared by Brethren members on behalf of students at Ashland University? The testimonies in this Campus Ministry Report will provide assurance that your gifts are indeed bearing fruit in student lives. In a very real sense, you are not only a partner in the lives of these students, but also in their future ministries. Thank you so very much for your ongoing interest in Campus Ministry.

— Dr. Mike Gleason
Director of Religious Life

When I came to this university three years ago, I had no idea what God had in store for my life. In coming to Ashland, I had two goals set for myself. The first was to get an education, and the second was to serve God in any way He wanted to use me. Ashland has supplied the opportunities for both of these goals to be met. The education and various Christian organizations enabled me to find where I was to be. The Christian organizations on campus allow students to be involved as much as they want. Each year God continually brings new students to this campus who are excited about their walk with Christ and eager to share it with others.

— Cheri Cahall

Cheri is a senior at Ashland University and attends the University Church.

AS THE CALL to life demands productivity, success, and commitment, even so the adventure of a college student is one in which similar requisites must be attained. However, just as the invitation of Jesus Christ calls us to "drop your nets and follow me . . ." (Matt. 4:18–20), the Christian student likewise finds not only a call to obedience to academic discipleship, but an equal call to spiritual discipleship as well.

In my final year as an Ashland University student, I see the Lord's plentiful harvest as well as the diligent and faithful workers reaping the fruit. Jesus Christ is being boldly revealed. From the new, incoming freshmen to the graduate program students, the people of Ashland University are beginning to drop their nets of self-seeking productivity, success, and commitment, and are picking up the rugged, wood-splintered cross that calls them to live for the One who died upon it. God is blessing the ministry of Jesus Christ at Ashland University because of those who are following Jesus Christ as a disciple and not following a cause He began.

God is being glorified through the classes, through the faculty, and through the character and integrity of the student. God is fulfilling *His* promise to accent *His* intimacy upon the individual, as He calls us to follow HIM—and nothing else.

— Matthew Fischl

Matthew is a senior at Ashland University, where he attends the University Church.

COMING to AU in the fall of '91, I was unsure of just what to expect from college life. Within the first month, this uneasiness subsided since, by this time, I had made a lot of new friends, including a vast group of fellow Christians I had encountered when I attended my first HOPE Fellowship meeting. I hold a very special place in my heart for HOPE because of the strength that, through Christ, it enabled me to have.

My involvement in a share group for three years developed in me leadership skills and, of course, a greater knowledge of the Bible. Participating in mission trips to Washington, D.C., Hazard, Kentucky, and His Mansion in New Hampshire greatly broadened my horizons and taught me greater respect for my fellow man. These trips also instilled in me a greater desire to share my faith and to help those in need. I am very thankful for all I've learned at AU intellectually and spiritually, and I feel confident that I am prepared to follow the Lord's plan for my life upon graduation this May.

— Joe Dilgard

Joe, a senior at Ashland University, is a member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church.



Ashland University students (l. to r.) Cheri Cahall, Matthew Fischl, Sarah Hollewell, Joe Dilgard, and Travis Parks.

WHEN I visited Ashland for the first time, I truly felt the love of Christ from both faculty and students. I knew that God wanted me here at Ashland University. Upon arriving at Ashland my freshman year, I came in contact with the Religious Life Office staff, and I have been challenged and motivated to desire a deeper relationship with my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

— Travis Parks

Travis, a sophomore at Ashland University, attends the University Church.

THE ASHLAND UNIVERSITY campus is literally filled with opportunities to serve our Lord. The Holy Spirit has been working overtime to prepare the hearts and minds of students, faculty, and staff to hear the Good News. In turn, these same individuals reach out to others who are searching for peace in their lives. A loving and encouraging community has been a special gift from our Father.

As a senior, I have seen the Lord use the Christians in our community in ways that vary from the "standards." In the sorority system, a Bible study is being held in one of the sorority suites—a place where few people had expected to hear the word of God. Times of prayer at midnight in the dorms have been wonderful periods of growth, sharing, and proof that our Lord hears and answers our prayers.

Please keep Ashland University in your prayers so that the spreading of the gospel can continue in ways and amounts we cannot fathom.

— Sarah Hollewell

Sarah, a senior at AU, is a member of the Lanark, Ill., First Brethren Church.

Brethren Enjoy Fellowship, Food, and Games At the N. Indiana Mission Fellowship Picnic

Elkhart, Ind. — Northern Indiana Brethren enjoyed a good time of fellowship, food, and games at the Elkhart First Brethren Church on August 20 when they attended the Mission Fellowship Picnic.

Special guests at the event were Brethren missionaries Allen Baer and Prasanth and Nirmala Kumar, as well as Rev. James R. Black, Executive Director of the Missionary Board.

This year the Mission Fellowship Picnic took the place of the Mission Fairs held by the northern Indiana Brethren churches the past six years. And instead of attempting to raise money at the event itself as in the past, money was raised ahead of time, with each church deciding for itself how it would do so.

A wide variety of methods were used to raise funds for missions. Members of a children's Sunday school class brought a quarter a month for missions throughout the year. Another Sunday school class set aside the offering from one Sunday each month for missions. Three churches received special mission offerings. The Men of Mission in another church held a pancake supper.

One enterprising church held a picnic and at the picnic had a "soak the pastor" event. People paid a dollar to throw a water-filled balloon at the pastor, with the money going for missions. In another church, some of the women put money into a jar every time during a six-week period they ate their favorite food. Other money-raising methods included a soup and sandwich supper and a white-elephant sale. *(cont. next column)*

As a result of their combined efforts, the northern Indiana Brethren brought to the picnic $3,013.01 for Brethren missions. In addition to raising money, other goals of the northern Indiana mission event are to educate people about Brethren missions and to provide an opportunity for good fellowship.

By changing from a Missions Fair to a Missions Picnic this year, the northern Indiana Brethren churches were able to raise more money for missions than in in past years and also to get more people involved at the local level. Plans call for a Mission Fellowship Picnic to be held at the Elkhart First Brethren Church again next year.

— reported by Sherry Houghton

Warsaw Youth Ride Bicycles To Raise Money for Missions

Warsaw, Ind. — Youth from the Warsaw First Brethren Church held a Bike-a-Thon on August 17 to raise money for the work of Brethren missionaries Rev. K. Prasanth and Nirmala Kumar.

The young people (and a few adults) rode ten miles and raised $600 for mission work in India. The riders were Rebekah and Ben Garber; Lindsay Patterson; Michelle and Sandy DeSanto; James and Elizabeth Goble; Blake and Callie DiRico; Daryl, Stacy, and Karen Sand; Christopher Martz; Joshua and Nathan Nibert; Adam and Alex Van Duyne; Kyle, Daniel, and Andrew Conrad; Brandon Stogsdill; and Larry Weirick. They were rewarded at the end of the ride with ice cream cones provided by Kathy Sand and Kathy Sparrow, who organized the Bike-a-Thon.

The Kumars spoke at the Warsaw Church during the morning worship service on Sunday, August 28, and the youth had the privilege of presenting them the $600 check.

— reported by Gloria Rigdon, secretary



Bike-a-Thon participants from the Warsaw First Brethren Church take a much-needed ice cream break after riding ten miles to raise money for missions in India.

Eric Bargerhuff is Associate Pastor at University Church



Ashland, Ohio — Eric Bargerhuff has been serving since May 15 of this year as associate pastor of the University Church in Ashland.

Bargerhuff is a second-year student in the Master of Divinity program at Ashland Theological Seminary, preparing for pastoral ministry and teaching. During the summer months, he served the University congregation full time, but he became part time when seminary classes resumed in September.

His responsibilities at the University Church include worship planning, preaching, music, visitation, discipleship, and teaching. Dr. Ken Cutrer is the senior pastor of the congregation.

Eric is from Mexico, Indiana, where he attended the Mexico First Brethren Church. He is a graduate of Ashland University and served four summers as a Summer Crusader and one summer as a Crusader Intern.

Goshen Church Reaches Out to Neighborhood Through Summer Program and Block Party

Goshen, Ind. — The First Brethren Church of Goshen held a neighborhood block party on Wednesday, August 24, as a means to get to know its neighbors and in order to provide the community with some good, wholesome fun.

The block party was the culmination of a summer-long program the church provided for the community on Wednesday evenings known as CheapSkates. CheapSkates offered rollerblade street hockey, volleyball, and basketball for older children and youth, and sidewalk drawing for the younger set.

The Wednesday evening program began with 11 children and no extra rollerblades, but by the end of the summer it had grown to as many as 47 children and nine extra pairs of skates to share with those who had none.

A variety of activities and events were available at the block party that concluded this summer program, including children's games, basketball, street hockey, a face-painting booth, and a dunk tank. (Senior Pastor Donald Rowser and Youth Pastor David Kline both got the "opportunity" to brave the cold water in this tank.)

Buttons the clown brought some color and some smiling faces to the crowd, and the Goshen City D.A.R.E. program and Fire Department had special displays. There was also plenty of free food, including freshly-popped popcorn from a popcorn machine.

The event concluded with a chalk talk on the church lawn by Pastor Donald Rowser, at the conclusion of which he invited those present to visit the Goshen Church's Sunday school and worship services. More than 200 people attended the block party, including the mayor of Goshen, Mr. Mike Puro.



One of the firemen tries to recruit Ben Leinbach for the department.





Left photo, Goshen Senior Pastor Don Rowser takes a dip in the dunk tank. Right photo, Brethren missionary Allen Baer helps grill hot dogs for the more than 200 people who attended the block party.

Photos by Richard Miller

Both the summer program and the block party were the outgrowth of a Passing On the Promise workshop. The Goshen Brethren saw this as a means of reaching out to their community. Roberta Wilfong was in charge of the block party and, according to reports, did "a terrific job!"

— reported by Anna Bollinger

Fairless Hills-Levittown Church Witnesses an Unusual Baptism

Levittown, Pa. — Members of the Fairless Hills-Levittown Brethren Church witnessed an unusual baptismal service in June.

The story began when 16-year-old Jay Trimble was invited to attend youth meetings at the church. He liked the meetings and soon began attending Sunday school and worship services. Then in January of this year he shared with the congregation how his life had changed since coming to The Brethren Church; even his marks in school had improved.

During the week following this testimony, he was hit by a speeding car in a sleet storm and thrown 80 feet. Then the ambulance that carried him to the hospital was hit by another car. For weeks he lingered near death. His parents immediately began attending church services. Four months later, on Jay's first trip away from the hospital, he included a visit to the morning worship service (in a wheelchair). Thereafter, whenever he came home from the hospital on a weekend, he came to church.

Then one Sunday morning, a 12-year-old boy came forward to receive Christ; then a father and his two teenagers came forward. We learned later that Jay had said, "I want to go forward to receive Jesus Christ as my Savior. But I cannot walk that far to the front."

The following Sunday Jay was seated near the front of the sanctuary. When the invitation was given, he came forward to publicly confess Jesus Christ as his Savior.

But the story doesn't end there, for the next Sunday his parents came forward. Prior to this, a teenage girl had come for salvation. And on another Sunday a young father came forward who, with Pastor C. William Cole's help, had received Christ as his Savior three years ago at a Philadelphia Hospital.

So when the day of baptism came, there were nine. The Trimble family was baptized last so that they could assist Jay. They lifted him into the baptistry and helped him down into the water. Since he could not kneel, he sat on the bottom step of the baptistry and bowed his head under the water when baptized. Needless to say, this baptism was a time of rejoicing for the Fairless Hills-Levittown Brethren Church. All nine who were baptized were confirmed and welcomed into the membership of the church.

— reported by Pastor C. William Cole

Cheyenne, Wyo., Brethren Church Celebrates 50 Years of Service to the Cheyenne Community

Cheyenne, Wyo. — Members and friends of the Cheyenne Brethren Church gathered on Sunday, August 28, to celebrate the church's 50 years of ministry to the Cheyenne community.

The special 50th anniversary morning worship service included a review of the history of the congregation by Bob Tinney; memories of the beginning of the church by Florence (Garber) White, one of the founding members of the congregation; and a time of recognition for other founding members of the church.

Special music for the service was presented by Lori Kolkman. A message—"The Strain of Growth"—was given by Pastor G. Emery Hurd. Following the service, a covered-dish dinner was held in the church fellowship hall.

Rev. and Mrs. Frank Garber founded the Cheyenne Brethren Church on August 25, 1944, beginning with a Sunday school program that expanded to regular worship services in December of that year. The church's original building was constructed in 1947. In 1993 the congregation dedicated a quarter-million-dollar renovation and expansion to that building, doubling its capacity. The church continues to grow, with plans to expand to a second, contemporary worship service this fall.

— reported by Alice M. Tharp



Members and friends of the Cheyenne Brethren Church enjoy a fellowship meal following the 50th anniversary celebration service.

Trinity Church Honors World War II Veterans

Canton, Ohio — In conjunction with the commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of D-Day on June 6 this past summer, seven members of Trinity Brethren Church in Canton were honored for their service in the Second World War.

The seven men, who were honored during the morning worship service at Trinity Church on June 5, were David Barnes, Paul Carper, Robert Frederick, David Hoobler, Dale Kurlinski, Lewis Minton, and Clyde Teis. Each of the men was presented a miniature of the World War Two Victory Medal.

In a brief tribute before decorating the veterans, David L. Watkins, a member of Trinity Brethren Church and a Lieutenant Colonel in the Army (retired), said: ". . . Because of D-Day's symbolic representation of the entire war effort, this is an appropriate time to honor those among us who served in the Second World War; to honor them for their own service, but also as representatives of a generation called to uncommon sacrifice. Not only did they rise to the enormous challenge of global war, they did it immediately after passing through the great depression . . . . For all of us, whether or not we remember D-Day or World War Two or Korea or even the Vietnam war, it is important to recognize that the nation's various patriotic anniversaries and holidays are not for the past alone, but for the future as well. They are opportunities to ask, 'Could I, could we as a people, make these sacrifices if they should have to be made again?' . . . Today we will present these men with tokens of gratitude which are certainly not adequate, but nothing could be. But their generation's deeds and sacrifices will be revered as long as the nation they served endures."

— reported by David Watkins



Honored by the Trinity Brethren Church for their service in World War Two were (l. to r.) Dale Kurlinski, Clyde Teis, Paul Carper, David Hoobler, David Barnes, Robert Frederick, and (not pictured) Lewis Minton.

Sorrows are often like clouds, which though black when they are passing over us, when they are past become as if they were the garments of God thrown off in purple and gold along the sky.

— H. W. Beecher

Members of College Corner Brethren Church Help With Search for Missing 3-Year-Old Boy

Wabash, Ind. — Members of the College Corner Brethren Church joined in a massive search on August 23 to find a three-year-old boy lost in a cornfield near the church building.

When the boy's parents discovered that their son, Tyler Conner, was missing, they ran for help to the house of a neighbor. This neighbor, who is a member of the College Corner congregation, went through the church's prayer chain, calling and asking for volunteers to help look for Tyler. Many of those who were called left their suppers on the table in order to go and join in the search. Those who couldn't help with the search committed themselves to pray that the boy would be found. The sheriff's department also contacted Joe Nice, who is likewise a member at College Corner, and asked him to take his hunting dog to look for the boy.

In all, more than 80 people and several aircraft were involved in the search, which was conducted through three 80-acre fields that surround the one-acre lot where the Conner family lives. Tyler was found at about 6:30 p.m. (about 2½ hours after he was discovered missing) by Noble Township fireman Larry Smith. He was found safe and unhurt.

An article about the search for the missing boy appeared on the front page of the *Wabash Plain Dealer* the following day. The article mentioned that "many helpers, including some from the College Corner Brethren Church" participated in the search for Tyler.

— reported by Bonnie Lawson

Two From N. Georgetown Ride Bikes to Build Houses

North Georgetown, Ohio — Rev. Fred Brandon, pastor of the North Georgetown First Brethren Church, and Ryan Newhart, a seventh-grader who attends the North Georgetown Church, joined 45 other bikers on Saturday, September 10, in a marathon to raise money for Habitat for Humanity.

On a bright, sunny day, the bikers rode from Sebring to Columbiana, Ohio, a 20-mile trip over rolling hills. Fortunately, both Pastor Brandon and Ryan have 18-speed bicycles.

Together the group raised $2,800 for Habitat for Humanity, with Pastor Brandon raising $565 of this amount. He was very grateful to the people of his church and the community who sponsored him.

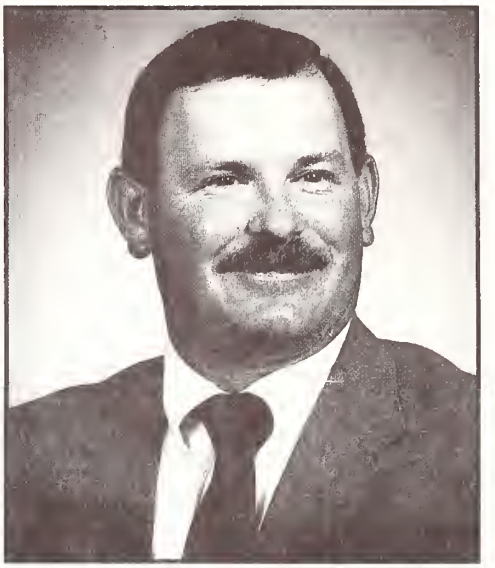
Local Habitat for Humanity affiliates build simple, decent, affordable houses for low-income families, with volunteers doing most or all of the construction work. The money raised by the bikers will go toward the purchase of building materials for new-home construction in the Salem, Ohio, area.

This was Pastor Brandon's second year of riding in the bicycle marathon, and Ryan's first. Both are already planning to participate in next year's event.

— reported by Carolyn Brandon



Ryan Newhart and Rev. Fred Brandon (foreground), with other bikers who participated in the marathon to raise money for Habitat for Humanity.



Linwood Church Sets Apart Ronald Miller for Ministry

Linwood, Md. — Ronald Miller, Sr., was set apart as a licensed minister in The Brethren Church during the morning worship service on Sunday, July 24, at the Linwood Brethren Church.

Miller serves as assistant to the pastor at the Linwood Church. He is also employed full-time with the General Heating Company. His goal is to begin attending Ashland Theological Seminary in the fall of 1995.

Rev. Robert Keplinger, senior pastor of the Linwood Church, preached on "God's Job Profile" during the worship service. Rev. Richard Craver, pastor of the Maurertown, Va., Brethren Church and a member of the Board of Spiritual Overseers in the Southeastern District, assisted with the setting apart of Miller.

Before becoming assistant to the pastor at Linwood, Miller served as assistant Sunday school superintendent, was president of the Men of Mission, and worked with the youth. Before coming to the Linwood Church, he was active in the St. Paul's United Methodist Church in New Windsor.

He is married to the former Sandra Renner. They have two sons, Ronald, Jr., (14) and Bobby (7). Following the worship service in which Miller was set apart, a reception was held honoring him and his family.

— reported by Pastor Robert Keplinger

The reason a lot of people cannot find opportunity is that it goes around disguised as hard work.

— Author unknown

Selfishness is the perfect soil in which to plant and reap a good harvest of unhappiness.

— Joan Zodhiates

From The Grape Vine

David Robinson, a member of the Oak Hill, W. Va., Brethren Church and a student at the Oak Hill High School, was recently accepted into the 249th Army Band of the West Virginia Army National Guard. On the basis of his exemplary audition on the tuba, Robinson was accepted into the band and awarded the rank of Private First Class under the Army Civilian Acquired Skills Program. The 249th Army Band performs throughout the State of Virginia at military ceremonies and civic events and has performed in the presence of the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Navy, governors, senators, congressmen, generals, and admirals. David is also a member of the Oak Hill Church youth band, which frequently plays during Sunday morning services. He is the grandson of Milton Robinson, a former pastor of the Oak Hill First Brethren Church.

Rev. Jerry Fike became pastor of the Vinco Brethren Church of Mineral Point, Pa., on August 21. A graduate of Ashland University and Theological Seminary, he pastored in Indiana and West Virginia (most recently at the Mathias, W. Va., Brethren Church) before assuming the pastorate at Vinco.

Rickey Bolden, pastor of Southeast Christian Fellowship, the Brethren congregation in Washington, D.C., was featured in the "Remember" section of the football program for the Cleveland Browns' football game against the Pittsburgh Steelers on Sunday, September 11. Bolden played for the Browns from 1984 to 1989 and, according to the article, "was considered to be the best athlete on the offensive line." The article went on to say that Bolden decided to retire from football during the 1990 training camp and to enter Ashland Theological Seminary. It also noted that he is now pastor of the Brethren church in Washington, D.C.

The **Brethren Hour,** a radio program featuring the teaching and preaching of retired Brethren pastor Dr. J.D. Hamel, is now being broadcast over three additional radio stations in Pennsylvania and one in Delaware. WCRO in Johnstown, WRDD in Ebensburg, and WNCC in Barnesboro recently began airing the program on Monday nights at 6:30 p.m. The program *(continued on page 22)*

Correction

The name of Linda Yoder was inadvertently omitted in the caption that appeared with the picture of the commissioning of the STAKE Home Mission Team, which appeared on page 14 of the September EVANGELIST. She was the seventh person from the left in that picture. Our apologies to Linda for this oversight.



Wabash, Ind. — Eleven new Christians were baptized July 10 at the College Corner Brethren Church, following their recent conversion to Jesus Christ. They were (front row, l. to r.) Lee Sweet, Phillip Rebholz, Troy Herendeen, Angel Herendeen, Rebecca Kellams, Amber Weimer, (back row, l. to r.) Pastor Glenn Grumbling (who conducted the baptism), Karen Rebholz, Matthew Barton, Bev Barton, Jim Barton, and Jamie Barton.

— report and photo by Bonnie Lawson

In Memory

Mary Showalter, 91, October 2. Member since 1915 of the Dayton Hillcrest Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Kenneth P. Clarkston.

Paul Witmer, 97, October 2. Longtime member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Arden E. Gilmer.

Esther McAvoy Ankrum, 96, September 29. Member for many years of the Bethlehem Brethren Church of Harrisonburg, Va. Services by Rev. Keith W. Simmons and Rev. Edward West. Mrs. Ankrum was the widow of Brethren Elder Freeman Ankrum, who died in 1972. The Ankrums are survived by two daughters, Mary Alice Bowman and Genevieve A. Shidler, and one son, Paul Ankrum.

June Byler Palaci, 78, September 14. Before her marriage, June Byler served with Robert and Jane Byler from 1949 to 1954 as a missionary for The Brethren Church in Argentina. In December 1954, she married David W. Palaci, son of an Argentine pastor, and the Palacis continued to serve the Lord in Argentina for many years. In recent years, the Palacis, their son David, Jr., his wife, and their three children have lived in Miami, Fla., where they have been active in a Spanish-speaking congregation. Memorial services for Mrs. Palaci were held at this church.

Robert Haugh, 80, September 9. Member for 57 years of the Milledgeville Brethren Church, where he served as Sunday school teacher and superintendent and worked with youth. Services by Pastor Kenneth Sullivan.

Claudina Cunningham, 80, August 26. Member and deaconess of the Milledgeville Brethren Church, where she served as librarian and was active in the W.M.S.

Helen Covington, 84, July 10. Lifelong member of the Oakville First Brethren Church, where she helped start Signal Lights, junior choir, was active in W.M.S., and held many offices. Services by Pastor Dan Lawson.

G. Gordon Downey, 101, April 13. Longtime member and deacon of the College Corner Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Glenn Grumbling.

Weddings

Stephanie Hammond to **Jason Miller,** September 24, in Kokomo, Ind.; Rev. Jim Thomas officiating. Members of the Loree Brethren Church.

Patricia Smith to **Paul Covington,** September 10, at the Oakville First Brethren Church; Pastor Dan Lawson officiating. Groom a member of the Oakville First Brethren Church.

Amanda Beason to **Nathan Williams,** September 3, at the bride's home in Pennsylvania. Groom a member of the Roanoke, Ind., First Brethren Church.

Heidi Michelle Fruitt to **Kurtis Allen Stout,** August 27, at Manchester College; Rev. Marlin McCann officiating. Bride a member of the North Manchester First Brethren Church; groom a member of the Burlington First Brethren Church.

Audrey Lea Miller to **Gary Lee Queckboerner,** July 9, at the Meadow Crest Brethren Church; Rev. Tom Schiefer officiating, assisted by Pastor Richard Austin. Members of the Meadow Crest Brethren Church.

Goldenaires

Myron and Ruthe Lamb, 65th, October 17. Members of the Waterloo Hammond Avenue Brethren Church.

Membership Growth

Vinco: 6 by baptism
Corinth: 3 by baptism
Oak Hill: 6 by baptism
St. James: 3 by baptism
Falls City: 4 by baptism
Milledgeville: 8 by baptism
Pleasant View: 2 by baptism
Flora: 5 by baptism, 1 by transfer
Fremont: 5 by baptism, 4 by transfer
Meadow Crest: 8 by baptism, 2 by transfer

Little Crusader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

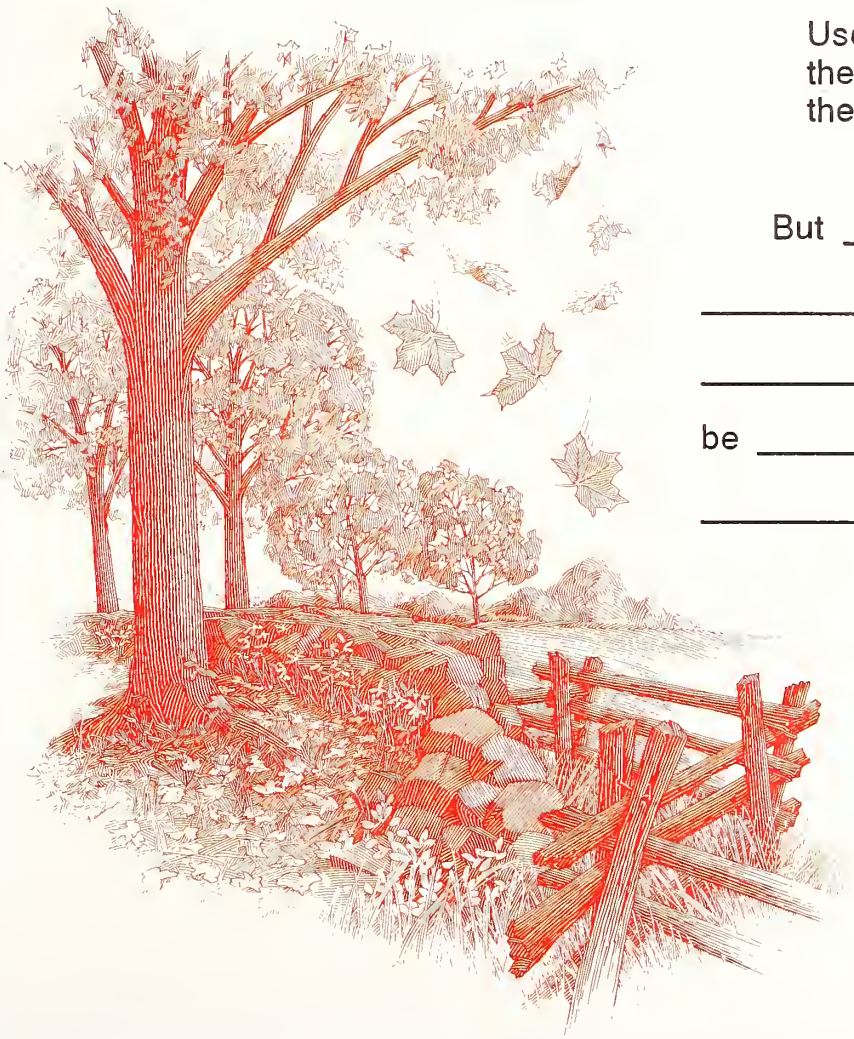
Dear Girls and Boys,

At our house we have a large growth chart on the back of our bedroom door on which we mark the progress of each of our boys as each grows taller. We measure their height on their birthdays and on special holidays. It's fun for them to see how much they've grown in a year's time!

This is an easy way to measure your physical growth. But what about your Christian growth? How can you tell if you have grown in Christ?

One way to tell if you have been growing is by remembering what you have learned about God. Do you remember the Bible verses that you memorized a week ago? Do you share with others? Do you obey your parents? Do you remember the Bible stories your Sunday school teacher or your parents taught you?

God tells us in His word in 2 Peter 3:18 that He wants us to grow in grace and in knowing more about Jesus. Just as we grow physically, we need to grow spiritually. Don't forget to do the things that help your spirit grow—read the Bible, memorize verses from the Bible, pray, and tell others how Jesus Christ saves us. Then you will really grow, grow, grow in Christ!



Use your Bible to find 2 Peter 3:18 and then fill in the missing words. (I used the *New International Version*.)

But _____ in the _____ and _____ of our _____ and _____ Jesus Christ. To _____ be _____ both _____ and _____! Amen.

Write one way that you can grow stronger in Christ.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Having the Bible in Times of Crisis:

What Difference Does It Make?

An interview with Fred A. Allen

Over the past few years, a steady stream of natural disasters has hit the United States from coast to coast. Deadly forest fires, floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, and earthquakes have taken their toll on entire towns and communities. The American Bible Society has been on hand to provide Scripture materials in the midst of these devastating crises.

In the following interview, Rev. Fred A. Allen, Director of the ABS National Program Development Office, explains why the Bible Society believes the Bible is important and relevant in times of crisis.

Question: Does the American Bible Society see itself as equal to churches and relief organizations that provide food and clothing during disasters? Why does ABS distribute Scriptures during a crisis?

Answer: The American Bible Society is a partner—a companion—with churches, para-church and community organizations that are concerned about and committed to addressing the needs of people in difficult situations such as crises that have resulted from natural disasters.

While we are not a mission-relief agency, we do provide Scripture resources that are designed to help victims of a crisis find solace and confidence, strength and courage when confronted by conditions beyond human control; when massive storms, hurricanes, and floods drive them to raise questions about the righteousness, the justice, and the goodness of God.

The Holy Scriptures have a unique and peculiar way of speaking to the depth of a person's soul, where human voices cannot reach, that inner chamber of spiritual need. And the Bible—the word of God—can nurture in a way that anxiety can be lessened, faith can be restored, hope can be reclaimed, and confidence can be renewed.

Q: What if the individual feels he or she has no relationship with God and therefore no reason to turn to the Scriptures for solace? How does the Bible Society get a Bible or a Scripture booklet to such a person?

A: Fractured relationships with God can often be restored through the message of the gospel, which proclaims that nothing can separate a person from the redemptive power of God. The Scriptures are filed with examples of how the word of God has healed broken spirits. And our office files are filled with letters from individuals who have turned to the Scriptures as a last resort and found the inner peace they so desperately sought.

The American Bible Society sees as its unique mission the task of providing Scripture resources to partner churches and other groups as they strive to meet the tangible, physical needs of individuals during a crisis. While we have ABS volunteers in communities throughout the country, we still rely heavily upon the churches and their channels of distribution to get the Scriptures to the people who need them when they need them. We work in partnership with the Salvation Army, the Southern Baptist Convention, World Relief, in addition to organizations such as the Red Cross.

Q: What kind of results have you seen from these partnerships and the unique role that ABS plays?

A: A pastor in California told us about his church's efforts to distribute the Scriptures to survivors of the earthquake that hit the Los Angeles area earlier this year. "There are a lot of people out there who are depressed and confused," he said. So his church distributed several ABS Scripture booklets and brochures to people standing in line for federal aid and to others living in temporary tents in parks in Los Angeles.

After the massive flooding in the Midwest in 1993, the director of a community support center in Illinois told us that "people who come in for food also come back to pray. They are recognizing that they cannot handle it alone. The Bibles have helped tremendously."

And there are other examples. A church relief worker in south Florida wrote this to us after Hurricane Andrew struck there in 1992: "We want to thank you for the Bibles and literature which ABS sent to us to give to the hurricane victims. If you could have seen their faces as we gave them out, you would not have believed it. Much good fruit came from the hurricane. Many people decided to commit their lives to Jesus. The Lord is continuing His wondrous work here in South Dade, amidst the destruction of battered spirits.

"We are so grateful to the American Bible Society for their cooperation with our church in helping us fulfill Matthew 28:19," she continued. "The relief effort continues, not only in material but also in the spiritual. People are more open than ever to hear the gospel and are anxious to read the Bibles we leave them."

Q: Are natural disasters—acts of nature—the only time the Bible Society makes these crisis-related Scriptures available? What about times of personal crisis?

A: I think personal crises are more important than natural disasters because natural disasters are so unpredictable. Personal crises occur every day, and yet most people are unprepared to handle them. For instance, look at the rioting that occurred in Los Angeles in 1992. People were injured and many more lost their jobs or their life savings when businesses were burned.

Our Scripture booklet, "Love Your Neighbor," was distributed following the tumult. That little booklet spoke to a variety of fears and anxieties in the Los Angeles situation where people had just lost a sense of composure.

We have Scripture resources that address all kinds of circumstances. These Scriptures speak very directly to people who are facing unemployment, hunger, homelessness, family stress, AIDS.

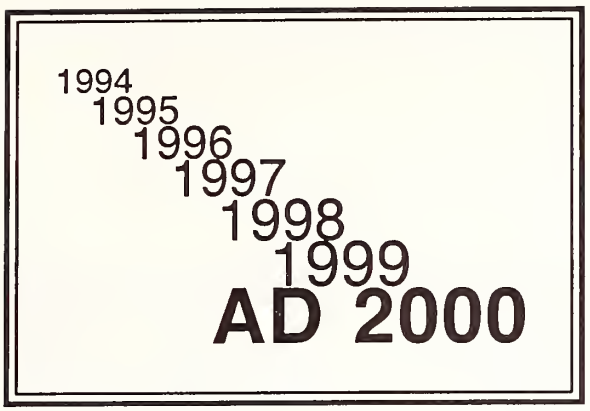
We also have the new Scripture booklet, "God Is Our Shelter and Strength." This booklet offers words of comfort and hope from the Bible during times of crisis and disaster. The Scripture passages tell the reader that God understands his or her fears and anger. They reinforce the fact that God's love is sure and that He can make all things new, no matter if you're facing destruction of your property or of your inner spirit. [✞]

From the Grape Vine

(continued from page 20)

is also heard over WNRK in Newark, Delaware. In addition, a Spanish version of the "Brethren Hour" that features Rev. Daniel Rosales, pastor of Iglesia Hispana de los Hermanos in Sarasota, Fla., is also being broadcast in every country in South America.

The name of **Rev. Bill Skeldon**, pastor of the Oak Hill, W. Va., First Brethren Church, keeps turning up in the newspaper. In March he was honored by *The Fayette Tribune* as "Plateau Person of the Week" (*see the May 1994 Evangelist, p. 18*). In September, *Golden Years . . . Golden Times*, a publication of *The Fayette Tribune* and *The Montgomery Herald*, did a lengthy article about Rev. Skeldon and his running. The article said that "Skeldon, who will celebrate his 65th birthday in December, can be seen every morning pounding the pavement along Rt. 19 between Oak Hill and Fayetteville." The article went on to say that Skeldon has competed in about 125 races, including eight marathons (26.2 miles) and a 50-mile ultra-marathon.



Reaching the World for Christ By the Year 2000

By Rick Wood

JUST FIVE YEARS remain until the year 2000. Excitement within the Christian community worldwide is growing as millions of Christians and thousands of Christian ministries from Zambia to Korea are coming together, cooperating, networking, and sharing resources with each other as never before.

Something unique in history is happening as Christians of many races, languages, and backgrounds are laying aside their theological, denominational, and other differences in order to work together toward a common goal. That goal is to present the saving message of Christ to every person on earth by the year 2000.

This vision has captured the imagination of Christian leaders and lay people all over the world as they have come together under the banner of the AD 2000 and Beyond Movement. This movement has as its motto "A church for every people and the gospel for every person by the year 2000."

GCOWE 95

On May 17, 1995, a total of 4,500 Christian leaders from 200 countries will gather in Seoul, South Korea, for the opening of the Global Consultation on World Evangelization 1995, also known as GCOWE 95. These leaders will set goals and make specific plans to bring the gospel to every person on earth in the next five years. Dr. Ralph D. Winter, founder of the U.S. Center for World Mission, said recently, "The AD 2000 Movement's face-to-face global meeting in Korea may be the most strategic Christian gathering in history." Each of the 200 countries that will be represented at GCOWE 95 has been building a network of local Christian leaders that is working to reach all the people of that country.

Mr. Wood is managing editor for Mission Frontiers, *the bulletin of the U.S. Center for World Mission.*

The AD 2000 Movement, headquartered in Colorado Springs, has gathered together an all-star cast of U.S. and international leaders. The honorary co-chairs of the International AD 2000 Movement include evangelists Dr. Billy Graham and Luis Palau, Dr. Bill Bright of Campus Crusade for Christ, Mr. Philip Teng of China, Eva Sanderson of Zambia, and Mr. Kyung-Chik Han of Korea. Rev. Luis Bush, born in Argentina, is the international director of AD 2000 and heads up the Colorado Springs office. The top 250 world leaders of AD 2000 will be meeting in Colorado Springs on November 28 to make preparations for the big meeting in Korea and to assess where Christianity is in reaching the goal of a church for every people and the gospel for every person.

The AD 2000 Movement has its roots in the Lausanne Movement, which Dr. Billy Graham initiated in 1974. Dr. Thomas Wang, who was the international director of the Lausanne Movement, is the church leader who started the AD 2000 Movement back in 1989. He is now its international chairman. AD 2000 has now grown into a global effort that has touched millions.

On June 25, 1994, one million people in Korea and 12 million people worldwide participated in the AD 2000-sponsored global March for Jesus, which was designed to be a time to worship and proclaim Jesus publicly in the streets of the world's cities. The largest single meeting was in Seoul, South Korea, where 700,000 Christians gathered to worship Jesus Christ.

Korea's leading role

Korea is an example of one country that is taking a leading role in the AD 2000 Movement. Amid increasing tensions with North Korea and the possibility of war breaking out at any time, the Korean Church, famous for its huge churches, is now determined to be a major player in taking the gospel to the whole world. Korean church leaders are making big plans for May 1995 when, in addition to GCOWE 95, they will be holding a major youth conference to dedicate 100,000 of their young people to take the gospel to all of the unreached ethnic groups of the World. The U.S. Center for World Mission in Pasadena, California, estimates that there are still 11,000 ethnic groups which the gospel has not yet penetrated.

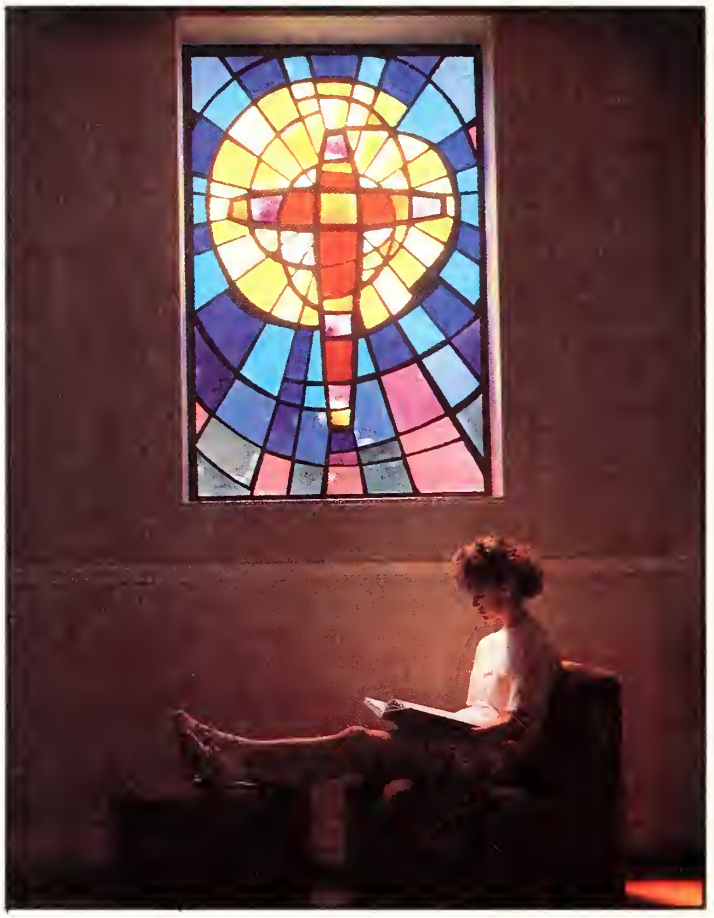
The Korean leader who is spearheading the AD 2000 efforts in Korea is Mr. Joon Gon Kim, who organized the first meeting in history of over one million Christians during the Billy Graham Crusade in Seoul in 1973. All the major denominations and churches in Korea have expressed their support for the AD 2000 Movement, calling it "the Movement of the Twenty-First Century."

A bold plan

North Korea and its new leader, Kim Yong Il, may have dangerous intentions for the South, but the Christians of South Korea are making big plans to bring Christ to their friends in the North. One of the major projects involves challenging 100,000 students to each adopt and pray for one of the 4,700 districts of North Korea. The hope was that *10,000* of these students would decide to take a one- or two-year break from college studies to live in the districts for which they have prayed. Their goal would be to establish a church in the district and to serve the community there. To date, *more than 35,000* students have committed themselves to this. If the Christians of South Korea and the AD 2000 movement have their way, both North Korea and the world will be a very different place in the year 2000. [⇧]

For more information about the AD 2000 Movement, you may contact:
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THE BRETHREN
Evangelist
NOVEMBER 1994



The Woman Responsible for Thanksgiving as a National Holiday

By Richard C. Winfield, editor

NEARLY EVERY AMERICAN knows that our annual observance of Thanksgiving Day looks back to the harvest festival held in Plymouth colony in 1621. But many people may not realize that Thanksgiving Day has not always been a national holiday in the United States.

Our nation's first President, George Washington, proclaimed in 1789 that a day of thanksgiving should be observed that year by the 13 states that then constituted the nation. But it wasn't until 1863 and the presidency of Abraham Lincoln that Thanksgiving Day became an *annual* observance. And this came about only because of the tireless efforts of a person little-known to us today, a woman named Sarah J. Hale.

Who was Sarah J. Hale?

Sarah Josepha Buell was born in 1788 in Newport, New Hampshire. In 1813 she married David Hale, a lawyer. He encouraged her to write for local newspapers. How she managed to do this while having five children over the next nine years is anybody's guess. At any rate, when her husband died in 1822, Mrs. Hale had experienced enough success as a writer to enter into a full-scale literary career. In 1827 her first novel was published and was well-received.

The following year, Rev. John L. Blake began a monthly woman's magazine in Boston and offered Mrs. Hale the editorship. She accepted, moved to Boston, and edited *Ladies' Magazine* there until 1837. The magazine featured fiction, poetry, essays, and criticism, and attempted to define and celebrate the wholesome and tasteful in American life. Mrs. Hale wrote most of the material for each issue.

In 1837 Louis A. Godey bought out the magazine and changed the name to *Godey's Lady's Book*. He retained Mrs. Hale as editor, and she moved to Philadelphia, where for the next 40 years she headed a magazine that prided itself on being "a beacon light of refined taste, pure morals, and practical wisdom."

A Thanksgiving campaign

Mrs. Hale began her campaign for an annual, national Thanksgiving holiday in *Godey's Lady's Book* in 1846—a campaign that was to last 17 years and more. But her first public statements on this subject came long before that date. As early as 1827 she wrote, "Thanksgiving like the Fourth of July should be considered a national festival and observed by all our people . . . ."

Mrs. Hale saw a Thanksgiving holiday not only as a day for giving thanks for God's goodness and His blessings, but also as a unifying bond for our nation. In this regard, we need to remember that she waged much of her campaign for a national Thanksgiving holiday during the years leading up to the division of the Union and the Civil War.

Mrs. Hale's efforts to establish a Thanksgiving holiday were not limited to her editorials in *Lady's Book*. She wrote letters to all the Presidents from 1850 to 1863 urging them to proclaim a national observance of Thanksgiving. She wrote to other influential people in government as well. And since there was no national observance of Thanksgiving Day, she also wrote to governors of states urging them to proclaim a state Thanksgiving holiday. Over the years she wrote literally thousands of letters—all by hand.

By 1852 she was able to announce in *Lady's Book* that all but two of the then 31 states had united in a common observance of a Thanksgiving Day. But she continued her campaign for a nationally-declared holiday. In 1861, the first year of the Civil War, she begged for a Thanksgiving Day of Peace, pleading that "we lay aside our enmities and strifes . . . on this one day." Her pleading failed.

But two years later, in 1863, in the midst of the Civil War, her goal was achieved. On October 3, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln issued what was the first National Thanksgiving Proclamation since the days of George Washington. All Mrs. Hale's efforts, her editorials, and her letters had finally borne fruit.

For the next several years, she continued to urge President Lincoln and his successor to proclaim the last Thursday in November as a national Thanksgiving Day, for at that time each year's observance of the holiday was by annual proclamation of the President. Thanksgiving continued to be observed every year from 1863 on, but it wasn't until 1941 that a joint resolution of Congress legally established the fourth Thursday in November as a national Thanksgiving holiday.

Some observations

Mrs. Hale's example reminds us what one person can accomplish by persistent and dedicated effort. But her example also reminds us that great achievements often don't come easily or quickly. It was 36 years from her first public statement appealing for a national Thanksgiving observance until Abraham Lincoln proclaimed the holiday in 1863. And during those years she wrote dozens of editorials and thousands of letters campaigning for this holiday.

We do well to remember this when we seek to bring about changes in government (for example, in laws concerning abortion, pornography, prayer in schools, a balanced-budget, etc.). In this day when we expect instant results, we need to take a longer view. And one or two letters to our congressmen may not be enough to get the job done.

One additional thought: Mrs. Hale labored long and hard to make sure that our nation would set apart one day each year on which we, as a nation, would express our gratitude to God for His goodness and His abundant blessings upon us. Therefore, let's make sure that we use the day for that purpose. Let's put some *thanks* into our Thanksgiving. And while we're at it, we might even want to express a word of gratitude as well for the dedication and persistence of Sarah J. Hale. [⇧]

THE BRETHREN Evangelist

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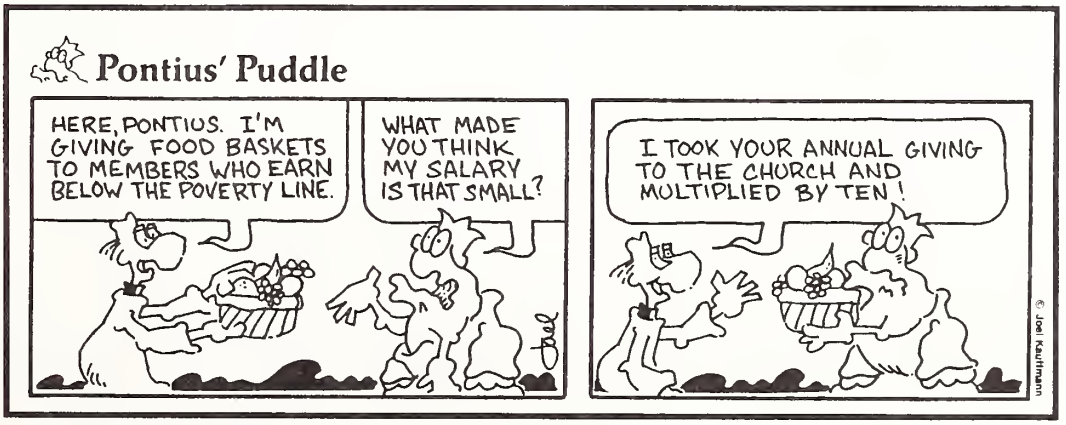
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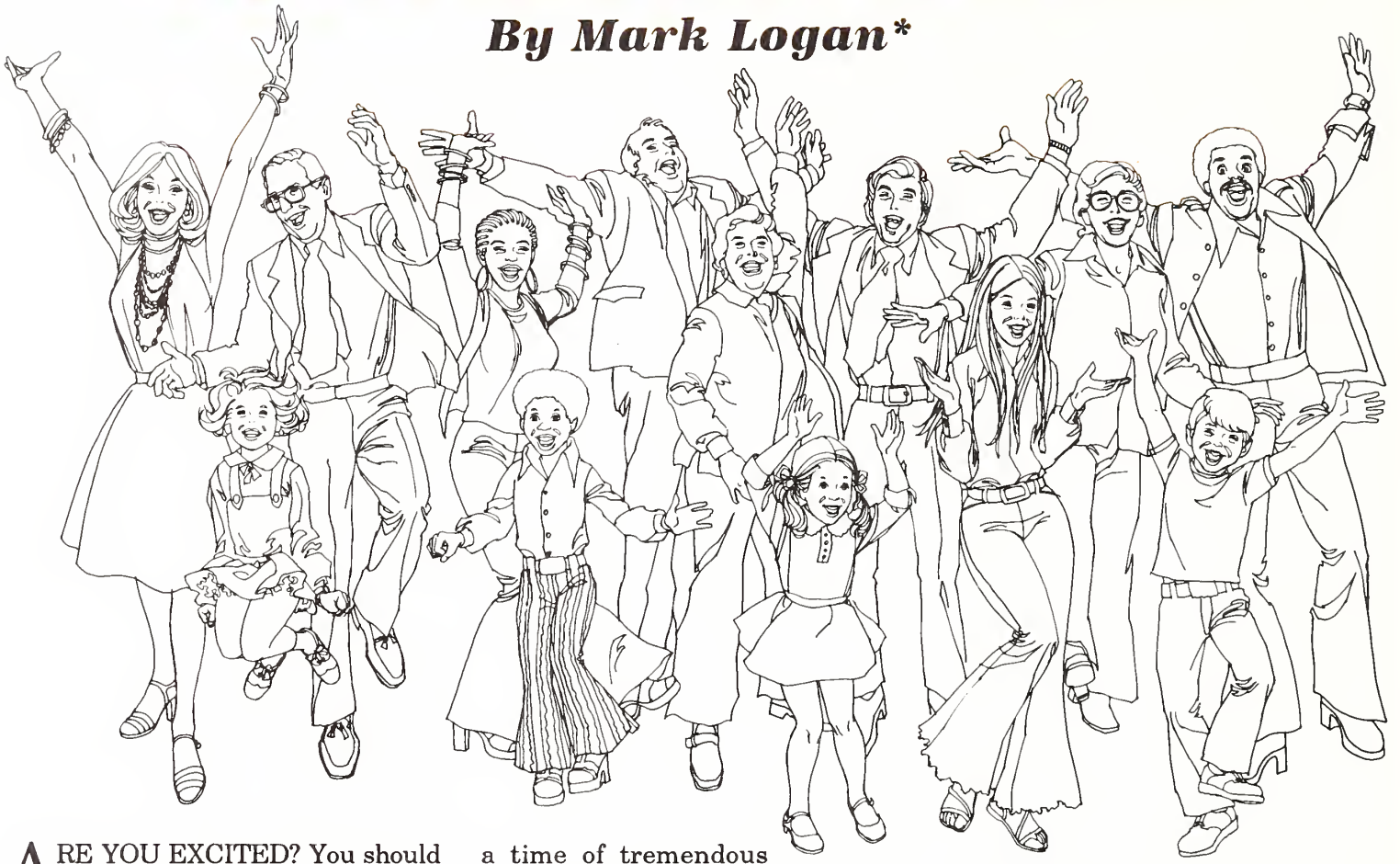
God's word says, "Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances . . . ."

The message in code is, "Help your neighbor who is in need."



Let's Get Excited!

By Mark Logan*



ARE YOU EXCITED? You should be. We are living in what some call the most exciting decade in the history of civilization—the nineteen nineties, the deadline decade. The world is counting down to the year 2000, the beginning of a new millennium.

All over the world and in all areas of society there is an air of expectancy. All kinds of predictions are being made, from the end of the world to the beginning of utopia. But only God knows for sure what the new millennium will bring.

We are God's people, and we are in the world today to be about the work of His church—to pray and plan with Him the extension of His kingdom into the year 2000 and beyond. It is a great time to be alive, a time of tremendous opportunity. And I am excited!

Our world is in a time of transition, and God's church must not be left behind. This is 1994, and The Brethren Church must move forward. Civilization is probably going through the time of its most rapid change since creation. Our last time of great change was the industrial revolution.

Today, countries like Malaysia and Singapore are skipping right over the phase of industrial development. These places are jumping straight from agricultural to high tech societies. Forget the automobile; they are plunging headlong from the horse-drawn plow to the personal computer. Our world is experiencing change as never before.

We live in a global community

One of the greatest factors in this change is the shrinking of the world map, the forming of a global community. Today people in New York and Tokyo are more alike than different. They both eat burritos from Taco Bell and they both wear suits made in Italy. In Moscow and in Buenos Aires, executives drive Toyotas to jobs where they do their work on IBM computers.

In today's world, we can no longer isolate ourselves from what goes on around us. We *see* people starving in Rwanda. We *hear* the shelling of Sarajevo. My own daughter is *feeling* the oppression of a military dictatorship in Haiti (*see p. 18*). What Castro does in Cuba affects the welfare system in the state of Florida. The weather in Brazil has raised the price of the coffee we drank this morning. We live in a global community.

What happens on the other side of the globe makes a difference in the way we live our everyday lives. But perhaps even more important to us as Christians is that what we do here affects the lives of other people all around the world. One aspect of this global society is the emergence of a worldwide language. English is fast becoming the universal language.

Already young people in Asia

**Rev. Logan, a former Brethren missionary in South America, now pastors the 340 Brethren Church near Elkton, Va. This year he served as moderator of the Southeastern District, and this article was his moderator's address at the district conference held September 24 at the Mt. Olive Brethren Church.*

and Africa are repeating the words of Madonna and Michael Jackson, whether they understand them or not. English is the accepted language of the new global community. In the global society of tomorrow, English-speaking cultures will have predominance, an unequal influence on the rest of the world. Like it or not, we are leaders in this new worldwide community.

What does this mean to us?

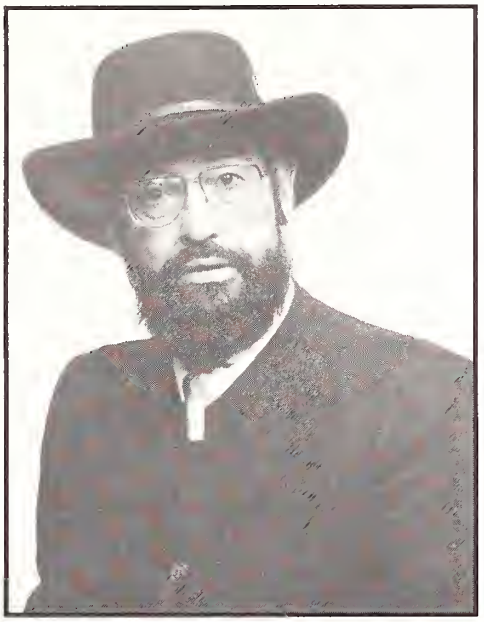
What does all this mean to us? First of all, it should alarm us as Christians when we realize that the society that surrounds us is fast becoming the model for the rest of the world. The old evening television "soap opera" *Dallas* is now seen in 98 countries around the globe. Sixty percent of the movies shown in Germany were filmed in America. When the iron curtain went down in Eastern Europe, the first thing in was Western-style crime and pornography. While in Paris last spring, I watched the evening news with Dan Rather. The same program was being broadcast in Tokyo. American beliefs and values are being exported.

Our first duty as Christians should be to commit ourselves to improving the quality of this product. We in the church must take the initiative to clean up our own act right here at home. We must start with the way we live and then be salt and light to those around us.

Another thing we must do is deal with the fact of change itself. We know change is inevitable. Change is like childbirth. Once you are pregnant—and our world is—when the time for birth comes, something has to give. It will happen, and it will hurt.

People around the world are being hurt by change. The medical profession has names for all kinds of new stress-related syndromes. Rapid change produces causalities. There is a limit to how fast we can change. People must have a stabilizing influence in their lives, some anchor in time of change.

This basic human need leads to another worldwide phenomenon. As the world rushes toward a global society, with the homogenization of outer tastes and trends, people are seeking an inner expression of their individuality. Even as people embrace change, they search for a point of reference, a fixed point that does not change. This can be seen today in the rise of ethnic and regional pride. It is also seen in the worldwide religious revival. People



Rev. Mark Logan
"I dress like this and I wear this beard because I believe in Brethren tradition."

across the street and across the sea are searching for a religious experience as never before.

What a challenge! What an opportunity for the people of God! Our God is the fixed point of the universe, the point of reference for all time. Our God begs people to enter into a personal relationship with Him. Are you excited? We are sitting on top of the product the whole world is clamoring for, the anchor in time of change. We are the people of the unchanging God. We are His representatives in this world of change. What an awesome time to be alive!

How do we meet the challenge?

But how do we meet this challenge? How do we as Brethren introduce the people of the next millennium to eternal stability? To a relationship with Jesus Christ? What do we Brethren have to offer? How can a church that is 250 years old communicate Christ to the modern, changing world around us?

Well, believe it or not, I am *not* going to say that we must abandon our past and throw off our tradition. In fact, that is the very thing we must not do. I dress like this and I wear this beard because I believe in Brethren tradition. I do it to promote Brethren tradition.

I like tradition. Tradition is a stabilizing influence. It gives permanence and credibility. In today's maze of independent churches, cults, and sects, tradition says, "We are not a fly-by-night outfit. We know where we come from, and we are here to stay." Our Brethren tradition is the strongest thing we have going for us in reaching people lost in a whirlwind of change.

We must understand our tradition

But of course, we ourselves must thoroughly understand our tradition. We must distinguish the outward expression from the inner principle. The plain coat and beard I have been wearing were the outward expressions of the inner desire of early Brethren to obey the Bible in spite of social pressure. This form of dress was a way of expressing Brethren obedience to God even when that meant going against the status quo.

This theology is valid today. It is much-needed in our time. But we need to express it in a different way. We must express it by our firm values and by the way we live. The plain-coat-and-beard look is out. It is considered old-fashioned. If I am to be taken seriously in today's society, I will need to change my clothes. This way of dress can be an obstacle to outreach. I am willing to change.* I want to remove all barriers to reaching the lost for Jesus Christ. But I will not change my tradition of obeying my Lord, even when those around me are willing to compromise.

How about worship? Do we Brethren have a worship tradition? Is there a form of worship we can call traditional Brethren? Yes, there is. It is worship that centers on the Lordship of Jesus Christ; worship that honors God and brings glory to His name. It is worship that is pleasing to God and relevant to His people.

The outward form and style of

(continued on page 7)

*At this point in his message, Moderator Logan did in fact change some of his clothes. He had even come prepared to cut his beard, but did not do so.



Understanding the Bible

Reading the Bible Devotionally

By Jerry R. Flora

JOHN WESLEY, founder of the Methodist movement, claimed that he was a man of one Book. He wrote:

I sit down alone,
Only God is here;
In his presence I open,
I read his books;
And what I thus learn,
I teach.

And teach he did! Perhaps no one else in history has matched Wesley's energetic life of evangelism, book production, travel, letter writing, social service, and church renewal. It came, he said, from reading the "books" that constitute the "Book."

In this article I want to describe for you a way of reading the Bible devotionally. Most of us do part of it—some of us may do all of it. But we likely do so without being conscious of the method. The approach is almost as old as the church itself. It goes back so far that its Latin name is often used: *lectio divina*, or sacred reading. There are four steps: *lectio* (I read), *meditatio* (I think), *oratio* (I pray), and *contemplatio* (I rest).

Preparing

But before we ever try to read Scripture devotionally, we must get alone and be quiet. In our fast, noisy, modern world, these may be the hardest steps of all. Yet, if we are serious about meeting our Lord in Scripture, we will find the place and make the time for *solitudo* and *silencio*.

Reading

Now we are ready to begin. We read (*lectio*) the written word of God which discloses the living Word, Jesus Christ. This is no ordinary kind of reading. It is a slowed-down reading in which one may actually speak the words aloud. In the biblical world all reading was oral reading. (In Acts 8:30, for example, Philip "heard" the Ethiopian reading from Isaiah.) All the books of the Bible lend themselves to reading aloud because they were written for that purpose.

Reading Scripture this way, even in a whisper, slows the pace and engages more of my whole self: eyes, hearing, and speech, as well as mind. The goal is not to cover any assigned amount of material. Instead, we read until a thought, phrase, or word catches our attention. Stop right there! Begin to repeat it over and over, letting the mind work with it, play with it, expand upon it, or "festoon" it (to follow C. S. Lewis).

Thinking

This is meditating. Biblical meditation has nothing to do with sitting in the lotus position mindlessly intoning a secret mantra. Biblical meditation is thinking about a word from God. It focuses the mind upon just one thing: what has God said? What does that mean?

The Hebrew Scriptures use a word for meditate that can also be translated "murmur." The context determines whether this repeated speaking is to be understood negatively, as murmuring (complaining), or positively, as meditating. It is appropriate to dwell on biblical truths by repeating them over and over (Josh. 1:8; Ps. 1:2; 19:14; 63:6b; 143:5). This sinks them deep into the bedrock of our self, below the surface, conscious mind.

Praying

As "reading" uses the senses and "meditation" engages the mind, so "prayer" expresses the feelings. This praying is not intercession for others, but a heartfelt expression of what I have found in my reading and thinking. This is personal devotional time, and the praying is for me. The Scripture passage may have brought conviction of sin. If so, there needs to be immediate confession. There may be petition for personal needs; there may be thanksgiving, praise, or adoration. The point is that reading and meditation lead naturally to prayer.

Resting

Once we have spoken our feelings to God in heartfelt prayer, it is time to rest. This is what the ancient word *contemplatio* suggests. Deep, expressive prayer can wring us out. We then need to fall silent, listen, and just be. God may have some gentle assurance to speak to us. There may be a renewed awareness that "I am with you." We may sense

Correspondence Welcomed

The members of the General Conference Executive Council's Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication invite readers to suggest topics or Bible passages to discuss in future articles in this column. Send questions, comments, or suggestions to the committee in care of The Brethren Evangelist, 524 College Ave., Ashland, OH 44805.

Dr. Flora is professor of New Testament Theology at Ashland Theological Seminary. He serves as a member of The Brethren Church's Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication, which is preparing this series of articles.

"Reading the Bible devotionally means taking it in bite-sized pieces, chewing them thoroughly, savoring each mouthful, and going in the strength of that—sometimes for forty days and nights."

a nudge or direction to specific action. The important thing is, after verbal prayer, to savor our nearness to God. We are then like a weaned child, no longer nursing but still needing to feel mother very close (Ps. 131:2).

Doing

Such devotional reading of the Bible will usually center, focus, balance, and energize us so that we are ready once more for active service. Words like *compassio* or *actio* may express this. The point is plain: glory on the mountain always leads to gumption in the valley, whether we are Moses (Ex. 32), Jesus (Mk. 9), or Peter (Acts 10). Reading the Bible devotionally comforts us; that is, it makes us strong ("fort") for whatever we are called to do, to bear, or to be.

Such slowed-down reading will not get us through the Bible in a year—that is not the point. The goal, rather, is to get the Bible through us drop by drop until our life becomes a rich, tasty brew. The best Scriptures to read in this way are the Gospels and the Psalms.

There is a place, of course, for reading the Bible in chunks to catch its great themes: ancestral stories, for example (Gen. 12–50); or liberation from slavery (Ex. 1–24); the grandeur of prophets who were theologians (Isaiah), preachers (Jeremiah), and visionaries (Ezekiel); the passion of a pioneer missionary (Paul); or the genius of an anonymous intellectual (Hebrews). But, for the most part, reading the Bible devotionally means taking it in bite-sized pieces, chewing them thoroughly, savoring each mouthful, and going in the strength of that—sometimes for forty days and nights (1 Kings 19:1–8).

Want to know more? Two excellent little books can help: *Too Deep for Words* by Thelma Hall (Paulist Press, 1988) and *Pathways of Spiritual Living* by Susan A. Muto (St. Bede's Publications, 1984). A more advanced resource is by Asbury Seminary's provost, M. Robert Mulholland, Jr. It is *Shaped by the Word: The Power of Scripture in Spiritual Formation* (The Upper Room, 1985).

We began with some lines from John Wesley. They explain in a nutshell the secret of his powerful, influential life. He believed that reading the Bible devotionally is the heartbeat of Christian faith and practice. The following lines are also from John Wesley: *O begin! Fix some part of every day for private exercises. . . . Whether you like it or no, read and pray daily. It is for your life; there is no other way: else you will be a trifler all your days.* [✝]

Let's Get Excited!

(continued from page 5)

Brethren worship has changed with time. We Progressive Brethren know that it does not change with ease. Our particular branch of Brethren exists today in large part because we insisted on a new style of worship, a style which used the contemporary music and instruments of the day. It had its cost, but today we do have a tradition, a tradition of worship that is relevant to the lives of our people.

I think we need to work on that more today. Some of our churches are struggling with just this task. People around us are searching for an inner relationship with the supernatural. They are not satisfied with the superficial worship that goes on in many churches. We need to develop a deeper devotion in our worship and in our lives if we are going to meet the needs of the people of the 21st century. We need to be exploiting our tradition.

We Brethren also have a missionary tradition. It is Brethren to have a passion for the lost. We have planted churches and sent our missionaries and evangelists in many manners and forms. Even our districts were formed in order to promote church extension. We have used different methods, but Brethren have always attempted to bring new people into the kingdom of God. We need to continue our search today for meaningful ways to express our traditional passion for the lost.

A tradition of spirituality

Then Brethren have a tradition of spirituality, of deep personal relationship with God. This is perhaps the greatest need in all the world today. And yet we as Brethren have almost forgotten our Pietistic roots. We need to revive our tradition of spirituality. We need to revitalize our devotional lives. We must cultivate our time with our Lord. If we are to meet the challenge of being salt and light to our neighbors, if we are to hold out an unchanging Christ to the 21st century, we simply cannot neglect the spiritual aspect of our own lives.

We Brethren have an honorable heritage, a true tradition. The real challenge today is to continue in our tradition. To do this we need to know our tradition, to understand the principles behind the practices; the reason behind our rhyme. We cannot let external expressions from the past replace the real traditions of the Brethren faith.

As Brethren we have much to offer. Let us share—

- our traditional values of obedience to God;
- our pursuit of relevance in worship;
- our commitment to the Great Commission;
- our continued seeking of a deeper personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Let us pray for more and better ways to share our true Brethren traditions, to share them with the global society as it rushes blindly into the next millennium. [✝]

Responding to the "Graying of America"

By Win and Charles Arn



MOST CHURCHES in America are following a course that will miss one of the greatest social changes—and greatest opportunities—in American history: the coming age wave. Like beach residents unaware of the approaching tidal wave, most congregations still seem to assume that "the future of the church is its youth." Today, tomorrow, and well into the 21st century, the more accurate description is: "The future belongs to the old."

Of course, most churches have a token senior adult class and perhaps a monthly potluck or field trip for their older adults. But such approaches are woefully inadequate, if not entirely irrelevant, to the task of reaching and ministering to the rapidly growing community of persons over 50.

Why are most churches so "senior insensitive"? It is generally for one or more of the following reasons:

1. **Ageism.** This disease discriminates against, diminishes, and demeans age. Unfortunately, it is alive and well not only in our society, but also in our churches.

2. **Ignorance.** A minuscule number of today's church leaders have been trained in the unique needs, opportunities, and outreach strategies required for persons over age fifty.

3. **Irrelevance.** Most existing "senior adult" church groups are operating on assumptions about senior adults that grew out of a different time and place. Today's senior adults are far different from their parents or grandparents.

Isn't it ironic that in the midst of decreasing resources, most churches don't realize the "hidden treasure" inherent in the senior adults of the church? For example, the chart below identifies five common church problems and the resources that senior adults have to offer to help solve these problems.

Dr. Win Arn is founder and president of L.I.F.E. International, 1857 Highland Oaks Dr., Arcadia, CA 91006. Dr. Charles Arn is editor of the LIFELINE, a newsletter for leaders of older adult ministries.

Resources Senior Adults Offer Churches

Common Church Problems	The "Hidden Treasure"
1. A survey we recently conducted among pastors indicated that their most common frustration is a lack of dedicated lay people to do the work of the church.	1. A separate study found that senior adults average two to three times as many available hours for church-related activities as any other age group.
2. Financial short-falls are the most common reason for not adding buildings, program, and/or staff.	2. In a given year, one senior adult church member will give seven times the amount of money that a "baby boomer" member will give in the same church.
3. Members transferring jobs and/or moving to another community account for a three to five percent membership loss in a congregation each year.	3. Senior adults change address an average of once every twelve years, compared to the national average of once every seven years.
4. Low institutional loyalty is a common characteristic of baby boomers. Most churches find it difficult to solicit membership or even long-term commitment from this age group.	4. High institutional loyalty is a common characteristic of senior adults. When they join, they stay and they are committed.
5. Biblical "illiteracy" is common among laity in many churches. As a result, pastoral teaching often remains at the "elementary" level.	5. Most senior adult members have been Christians for years. Having experienced life's mountains as well as its valleys, they have a wealth of maturity and wisdom they can share with others.

"The graying of America provides an enormous opportunity for the church perhaps unique in this century. But without a major retooling of strategy and tactics, the church will be left behind."

There indeed are effective ways for churches to respond to the challenge of an aging population. The graying of America provides an enormous opportunity for the church perhaps unique in this century. But without a major retooling of strategy and tactics, the church will be left behind. To restate: the approach most churches presently have for ministry to the aging adult population is woefully inadequate, if not entirely irrelevant.

So, what can be done?

1. **Realize that all seniors are not seniors.** A new generational grouping has emerged in our society during the past generation. Their members are called "middle adults" and include those people between 50–70 years of age. They are, as *U.S. News & World Report* says, "a new generation, different not only in size, but in vitality and outlook." Older adults are living healthier, more active, productive, longer lives. In reality, a person of 50 or 60 can expect to live fifteen, twenty, thirty more years. It is, indeed, their middle years. In their own minds, certainly, they are not "senior adults."

2. **Realize that age does make a difference.** People 30 years old are different from people 60 years old; not only in the hair on their head, but in the mind inside. Older adults think differently from younger adults. (*See chart below.*)





David Wolfe, a knowledgeable researcher and marketer, draws some fascinating contrasts between older and younger adults:*

Younger Adults	Older Adults
• Heavily influenced by peers	• Declining influence by peers
• Highly materialistic values	• Declining materialistic values
• More objective	• More subjective
• More extrospective	• More introspective
• Low sensitivity to context	• High sensitivity to context
• Perceptions in black and white	• Perceptions in shades of gray
• More rigid	• More flexible
• More subordinated to others	• More individualistic
• More predictable behavior	• More discretionary behavior
• More price sensitive	• Less price sensitive
• Simple ways of determining values	• Complex ways of determining values
• Detail oriented	• Whole-picture oriented

*David Wolfe, "Targeting the Mature Mind," *American Demographics*, March 1994, pp. 32–36.

Christian Implications

What does this changing demographic landscape mean for the church?

Most importantly it means that the old ways of doing senior adult ministry must be reevaluated. It is my belief that even the term "senior adult" will become politically *incorrect.* As more and more baby boomers inch toward that age category (the first boomers will turn 50 next year), the stigma attached to the word "senior" will make it a liability to effective ministry.

Even now we are finding that when churches offer a "senior adult" program, at most only 15 percent of those church members who qualify to be there actually are. As we have researched this phenomenon, we have found that most do not want to be lumped into the category of senior citizen, either in the minds of others or in their own minds.

The new and still emerging strategies that will be necessary for effective ministry to "middle adults" have many implications for programming, evangelism, and scheduling of church activities. The church that is "age sensitive" will be providing a *variety* of groups to appeal to the diversity of interests, needs, and activities for each age group.

Getting Started Right

We are often asked the question, "If you were to develop an age-sensitive adult ministry, how would you begin?" Here are five components:

1. Find, select, and train leaders. The success of your adult ministry will be directly related to the quality of your leaders. Someone needs to own the goal of ministry/outreach to young, middle, and senior adults. The leaders who will be most successful in each group have a genuine love for people in that group. It's not a job, it's a ministry.

In research we conducted with

"The 'age wave' is swelling! The 60+ year old age group is growing three times more rapidly than the population at large; and for the first time in American history, there are now more citizens over age 65 than under age 18."

500 churches that had a full- or part-time senior adult staff member, we found that the leaders who had received specific training in this area were far more effective—and their adult ministries were more likely to be growing—than were leaders who had received no training. (Eighty percent of all older adult staff members had received *no training* whatsoever in their field.) We also found that retired pastors are generally ineffective as middle- and senior-adult leaders unless they have been retrained in the unique issues and challenges of senior-adult ministry in the 1990s.

2. Get the facts. Here is a proven principle: "Abundant, accurate information, properly interpreted and applied, enables churches to be good stewards of the grace of God and effective communicators of the Gospel of Christ."

What are the actual statistics in your church? How many members are over age 50? 55? 60? 65? What are the age-groupings in your community? How many are homebound? What percentage are males, females? What are the various needs and interests represented in your prospective constituency? Effective programs and activities will be based on the findings of your research.

3. Begin with an adult *ministry*, not a senior adult *group*. This distinction is important. If you have a "senior adult *group*," you limit the potential involvement to those individuals who see themselves as "senior adults." Many other senior adults in your congregation and in your community will not identify with "those old people." In contrast, if your paradigm is an adult *ministry*, all kinds of groups can develop, many of which would not even be identified as "senior adult." A church of 300 members could have ten to fifteen various adult groups responding to the variety of needs and touching the lives of many more people.

4. Develop a Purpose Statement. A clearly-written purpose statement will be the guiding light for a successful older adult ministry. This purpose statement should be "owned" by the members and be a yardstick to regularly measure progress. If a clear purpose statement is not established and used early in the ministry, the activities will become increasingly self-serving and self-centered.

Here is one purpose statement developed by an age-sensitive adult ministry. Use or adapt it if it describes the purpose you desire for your adult ministry. If not, create your own.

> *The adult ministry of __(name of church)__ has as its purpose to communicate and share God's love to those in the church family and to those outside the church. The assumption behind the adult ministry and the groups and activities sponsored by this ministry is that they exist for the purpose of serving, not being served; of giving, not receiving.*

5. Build your adult ministry on adult motivators. Marketing researchers have spent considerable time and money seeking to identify the reasons today's older adults buy or don't buy certain products. Their discoveries are of value to church leaders who are seeking to reach this same generation in order to encourage them to "buy" a new lifestyle in the Christian faith and community. According to these studies, older adults are motivated by one of five values that form the foundation of most of their meaningful activity.* Those values are:

- Autonomy — they desire to be or remain self-sufficient.
- Social and spiritual connectedness — they respond to people more than programs.
- Altruism — they desire to give something back to the world.
- Personal growth — they desire to continue developing as human beings.
- Revitalization — they respond to activities that bring fresh and new experiences.

Effective older adult ministries of the 1990s and of the 21st century will be those which integrate these values and motivators into a creative variety of activities and experiences.

The "age wave" is swelling! The 60+ year old age group is growing three times more rapidly than the population at large; and for the first time in American history, there are now more citizens over age 65 than under age 18.

The "age wave" is rapidly approaching! Those churches that are not prepared will be swamped by the sheer numbers, diversity, and impact of these older adults. But those churches that are prepared will get out their surfboards and catch the ride of a lifetime! [⇧]

*For a more comprehensive discussion of these values, see the above-mentioned article by David Wolfe in *American Demographics*.

Pastors and church leaders who desire to learn more about how to minister effectively to older adults will have the opportunity to do so at the **North American Congress on the Church and the Age Wave**, to be held May 1–5, 1995, at the Glen Eyrie Conference Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Nationally-recognized leaders, futurists, and demographers will serve as presenters. Experienced practitioners will lead a variety of workshops providing models, ideas, and practical steps of strategy. Participants will gain a better grasp of the issues and answers for effective church ministry as Americans grow older in the 1990s and beyond.

For more information, contact L.I.F.E. International, 1857 Highland Oaks Dr., Arcadia, CA 91006 (818-355-2470).



We Just Wanted to DRAW Your Attention to Brethren Home Missions

Drawing Attention to Brethren Home Missions

By Russell C. Gordon

IT IS GOD'S WILL that the church be fruitful and multiply. To that end, the early church is our model. It is a remarkable record of growth. Wherever Christians were, they spread the word of the gospel from house to house and in the synagogues.

It all began with the 12 disciples, then with the 120 and the Church at Jerusalem. The growth of this church was phenomenal, but it had an inward focus. Then the Lord allowed a great persecution to come. Acts 8:1–4 unfolds the story of the scattering of the believers and the birth of scores of new churches. The focus had become outward.

The early church realized that life continues by giving life to another. The same is true today. As a part of the church, The Brethren Church must continue to pass on life to others. One of the best ways to do this is by planting new churches.

There are at least four reasons for us to plant new churches: (1) New churches reach more of the nation than any other evangelism method. (2) New churches represent continual evangelism until the Lord Jesus comes again. (3) New churches tend to produce more pastors, missionaries, and Christian workers. (4) New churches help make it possible to expand overseas missions.

It is interesting to note that in 1900 there was one church for every 400 people in the U.S.A.. In 1950 there was one church for every 500 people in the country. By 1980 the number had declined to one church for every 8 00 people. And today that has decreased to one for every 1,000 people. Other statistics tell us that about 70 percent of all Americans are non-Christians.

Home Mission Congregations

Northwest Brethren Chapel, Tucson, Ariz.; Rev. David West pastor.

Centro Cristiano Familia, Pasadena, Calif.; Rev. Mario Fuentes pastor.

Bloomingdale Brethren Church, Valrico, Fla.; Rev. David Stone pastor.

STAKE, Orlando, Fla.; Rev. Kerry Scott pastor.

Iglesia Hispana de los Hermanos, Sarasota, Fla.; Rev. Daniel Rosales pastor.

Carmel, Ind., Brethren Church; Rev. James Miller pastor.

Greenwood, Ind., Brethren Fellowship; Rev. Tom Conrad pastor.

Mountain View Brethren Church, Frederick, Md.; Charles Beekley pastor.

Walcrest Brethren Church, Mansfield, Ohio; Todd Bonnett pastor.

Northview Brethren Life Church, Springboro, Ohio; Rev. Archie Nevins pastor.

The Brethren Church of Medina, Ohio; Tom Sprowls pastor.

The 340 Brethren Church, Elkton, Va., Rev. Mark Logan pastor.

Southeast Christian Fellowship, Washington, D.C.; Rickey Bolden pastor.



Rev. Russell Gordon, Director of U.S. Ministries and Church Growth for The Brethren Church.

Vast numbers of unreached people live in every community in America. We must enter some of these communities and share the Good News of salvation through Jesus Christ! We must commit ourselves to the planting of new churches. We must do our part in the growing, nourishing, and reproducing of the church.

At this Thanksgiving season of the year, I am thankful that I can say, "The Brethren Church is taking seriously the matter of reaching the unchurched through the planting of new Brethren churches."

The mission field surrounds us. Brethren across the United States are beginning in new and fresh ways to reach out to that mission field. On the following pages you will read about some of the attempts that Brethren are now making to reach the unchurched with the Good News through church planting. [✝]

A Vision to "Win the Race at Indy!"

By Tom Conrad

THE GREENWOOD Brethren Fellowship is part of the vision of the Indiana District Mission Ministry to "Win the Race at Indy!" The race started with the formation of a Brethren church in Carmel. The race advanced with the formation of the church in Greenwood, and it will continue with churches being planted all over the greater Indianapolis area.

Basis of the vision

The basis of the vision is the philosophy of planting and expanding cell churches. Cell churches attempt to reach people with the gospel in the homes and communities where they live and work. In the beginning there is no centralized facility where ministry takes place. Ministry occurs through the lives of Christians in homes, work places, social events, schools, and in any other place and situation where people are found.

Since the Carmel church is already ministering in the northern part of the Indianapolis area, emphasis is now on the Greenwood area. The vision is for a church-planting movement—not just the planting of a local church.

Core couples

There are four "core" couples that are at work in the Greenwood area. Each of these couples is committed to reaching the area in which that couple lives.

Tom and Tiona Conrad

Pastor Tom and Tiona Conrad live in the Yorktowne Farms Community. This is an apartment complex of more than 300 families. The Conrads have been working with the management of the complex to be involved in various community programs. There are three micro-ethnic communities within the Yorktowne community. The Conrads envision three cell ministries targeting these non-believers.

Jeff and Cindy Gilmer

Jeff and Cindy Gilmer have moved into the Mission Hills Apartment complex. This is a community of at least 280 families. The Gilmers are in the process of being trained to establish outreach relationships.

Joe and Delilah Garrett

Friendly Village Trailer Court is the home of Joe and Delilah Garrett and 500 other families. The Garretts are hosting a cell (small group) in their home on a weekly basis, with five families attending. Plans call for a second cell here in early 1995.

The management of the trailer court has granted permission for the Greenwood Brethren Fellowship to host Sunday services in the club house beginning in November. It is fully furnished and rent free. The management also is providing free monthly advertisement in the community newsletter. Six families within the community have already called and said they will attend when the services are started.





Tom and Tiona Conrad

Brad and Tammy Moore

Brad and Tammy Moore are hosting a weekly cell group in their apartment. The Moores live in the Laurel Lake Apartment complex, which is made up of about 250 families. Three to four families have been attending this group. The management in this complex has also endorsed any outreach events and advertising within the complex.

Please pray for us as a core group as we continue to be a part of "Winning the Race at Indy" for Jesus Christ. Pray that we will continue to have open doors to minister in Jesus' name and to share the Good News. God can, and will, reach and disciple a world-class city through the Brethren if we all remain faithful. [⇧]

The Woman's Outlook Newsletter

A publication of the Brethren Woman's Missionary Society

November–December 1994 Volume 8, Number 2

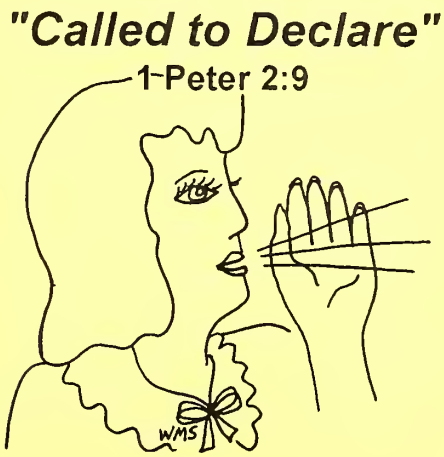
The President's Pen

Greetings!

I'm sitting on my front porch swing writing this and watching the leaves fall softly to the ground. It is a beautiful Sunday afternoon and a nice day for "porch sitting." The past few weeks have been so nice weather-wise. I try to walk for 20–25 minutes several times each week, and I can see the changing season. I know winter is coming, and it is not my favorite time of year. But winter *will* come and I will just take one day at a time and know I can look forward to spring!

Looking forward to the changing seasons should remind us of how much we have to be thankful for. The beautiful colored leaves on (and off) the trees, the white snow as it covers the ground, then the lovely spring buds on flowers and trees. The sunshine of summer brings beautiful flowers and plentiful vegetable gardens.

All around us we see God's handiwork. If we stop to think about all of the abundance that God has showered on us, we will discover many reasons to say thank you. Unfortunately, it is all too easy to take God's goodness for granted. We have food, clothing, and shelter; yet, in some parts of the world, many people are fighting hunger, poverty, and homelessness. God continues to bless us in abundance, not only in material things, but also in spiritual things. We can give liberally of our time, money, and talent to help spread the gospel and to help the poor and needy people in Jesus' name. Let's do this on a daily basis, so we don't forget all that God has done for us.



Conference has come and gone, but I trust that those who attended will have taken many fond memories home with them. It has been a pleasure to have Prasanth and Nirmala Kumar with us for the past three months. They returned to India in early October. My two grandchildren, Randi and T.J., grew very fond of them. They ran to greet them with a big hug and loved to have Nirmala read to them. I'm sure that the Kumars' children and grandchild will be very happy to have them home again.

It was nice also to have Allen Baer with us for Conference. He is such a hard worker that I am sure he was missed in Argentina and that they were glad to have him back.

Thanks to all of you for your help during the WMS meetings at Conference, whether it was special music, devotions, serving on a committee, or being a delegate or a visitor. By working together, we had a good Conference. Be sure to read over the WMS Constitution and send any changes you want considered to your District President. We will vote on those changes at the 1995 General WMS Conference.

The Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons are special times—if we need special times—to declare our faith. Our greetings, gifts, music, even our attitudes should be testimonies of God's gift to us. Jesus Christ was born to save us from our sins. This good news, first told by the angels, is ours to tell to the shepherds in the field—those who don't know Him. *Declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light* (I Peter 2:9e).

God Bless You.
Shirley Black



NATIONAL BIBLE WEEK

November 20–26, 1994

"The Bible and Society"

Text: *I will never forget Your precepts, for by them You have given me life.* Psalm 119:93

Bible reading and the teaching of Christian values are no longer permitted in many school systems in the Western world. This is not the case in Eastern Europe, however.

Speaking at the American Christian Educators Convention in November 1992, a Russian delegate said, "Seventy years ago we closed God out of our country, and it has caused so many problems in our society that we cannot count them. We must put God back into our country, and we must begin with our children."

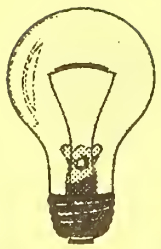
The deputy of the Ministry of Education said, "Do we have the right to deprive our children of knowledge about God and Christian values? No, and once again, no!"

A plan was then drawn up to send 12,000 Christian teachers to the Commonwealth of Independent States. Today Bibles are being sent to Russia, and many will be used in the schools.

Getting the Bible back into our individual lives is the first step in getting it back into our classrooms and into society. We must read it regularly, believe what it says, and obey it faithfully.

May the psalmist's prayer become our prayer: *I will never forget Your precepts, for by them You have given me life.*

Herbert Vander Lugt
OUR DAILY BREAD
September 28, 1994



HERE'S AN IDEA

MOMS IN PRAYER, a group of women (and men) who believe in the power of prayer to make a difference in our schools and the lives of students, meet to share and pray about their concerns. The Milledgeville women participate in MOMS IN PRAYER every Monday morning for one hour during the school year.

Roxie Stahl, corresponding secretary in HUNTINGTON, sent several news items. The ladies were "Big Sisters" to nearly 20 "Little Sisters" last year, sending greeting cards and praying for them daily. Just before the new school year began, a Pepsi party was held when the "little sisters" were introduced to their "big sisters." They enjoyed games and refreshments.

The HUNTINGTON ladies also pray secretly for each other. At their September meeting, each member draws a name from a "hat" and becomes the secret prayer pal of that person. They are to pray faithfully for that prayer pal for a year. At the August meeting, a fellowship time is held and identities are revealed with a small gift exchange. Much good is accomplished and close friendships are woven through secret prayer with the Heavenly Father.

It has been a long time since Mother and Daughter parties were enjoyed and a long time still remains before the next events. These three ideas are good for considering, especially if you are on your planning committee.

The Priscilla Circle in MILLEDGEVILLE sponsored a Victorian Tea Party Sunday afternoon. Women of the church were hostesses at tables of ten and served lemonade and hot flavored teas, as well as cheese, crackers, a variety of cookies, nuts, and mints.

The program guest was Myrle Fuller of Oregon, Illinois. She teaches literature to 7th and 8th graders, and she is a storyteller. She told several stories and gave this beatitude: Blessed is He who keeps me through the day.

Special music was given by Brenda Sebeck and tributes were shared by Lyndi Hutchison and Ann Millhouse. The afternoon concluded with the group singing "Living for Jesus," accompanied by Vicki Deets, and the benediction. Gini Hutchison and Wendy Wiersema were chairmen.

Roxie Stahl reported the enjoyable evening in HUNTINGTON, when Polly Roush, the wife of the former Congressman J. Edward Roush, presented her program "Shoes." Decorations for the covered-dish dinner were shoes filled with miniature potted plants, place mats bordered with footprints and centered with satin slippers. The bookmark favor was the poem, "Footprints." Group singing included "Faith of Our Mothers" and "Stepping in the Light." Nina Pressler, her two daughters, and daughter-in-law gave tributes in poetry to mothers and daughters.

While Mrs. Roush told of the role shoes have played in our lives through the years, she was informative, humorous, and inspirational! Her story began with Cinderella and her glass slippers, and then moved to King Louis XIV who was the first to wear high heels. In her suitcase were many types of shoes, and Polly made an application of the parts of the shoe to us: the shoe sole, eyes, strings, tongue, and heel. "There is a place for all kinds of people and all kinds of shoes," she said. "The Lord will grant us strength on stony paths; God will provide."

Polly burst into song with her presentation, made a line drawing of the old woman who lived in a shoe, and emphasized putting on the whole armor as stated in Ephesians 6:11, especially "having your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace."

Diana Gurtner was chairman.

Donna Stoffer described the ASHLAND GARBER ladies' evening. Dinner was prepared and served by the men and boys. Teddy bears were the theme of the evening—all colors, materials, and sizes. Donna Stoffer welcomed the ladies, Marty Weaver and Bonnie Gibson directed fun singing, and Trudy Kerner gave the devotions, using the bear theme.

The speaker was Dave Kowalka, principal of Grant Street School and guest columnist for the *Ashland Times Gazette*. He took the audience Down Teddy Bear Lane to "The Teddy Bears' Picnic," and displayed many teddies he has made. He told the history of the teddy bear and of his own collection.

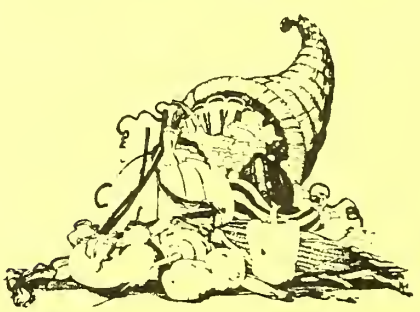
A Thanksgiving Prayer

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

In my prayers, I find that too frequently I am asking the Lord to do something instead of simply adoring and praising Him. One evening, while I was walking, I thanked Him alphabetically.

A - animals, appliances
B - bodies, birds
C - children
D - day
E - energy
F - friends, family
G - grandchildren
H - houses, health
I - initiative
J - Joan (myself)
K - keyring
L - laughter
M - music
N - night
O - opportunities
P - patience
Q - quiet
R - resurrection
S - salvation
T - truth
U - unity
V - voice
W - work
X - x-ray
Y - you
Z - z-z-zzz

My cornucopia (cup) runneth over.



THE WOMAN'S OUTLOOK NEWSLETTER

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In Memoriam

Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints. Psalm 116:15

Virginia F. Locke—a gracious lady—died August 26, 1994. She was a member of the Maurertown Church and was active in the WMS there. She was known and loved by Brethren across the country. She was especially loved in the Mt. Olive and Bethlehem churches, where she served as pastor's wife for many years.

She was a registered nurse and cared for her husband, John, through years of multiple sclerosis. She also cared for her sister, Nellie, as long as her health allowed.

She was past president and vice president of the Southeastern District WMS. To many of us in The Brethren Church she was a special encouraging friend. She was interested in what was happening in the church on the local, district, and national levels, and she knew what was going on.

We miss this special lady.

Susan Kidd

Ruth C. Stoddard was a person whose name was almost synonymous with the First Brethren Church in Hagerstown. She was a member there for 66 years and in charge of the Nursery Department for over 50 years. She died May 11, 1994.

Church was her primary function of life; she was knowledgeable about every organization of the church—local, district, and national. Her motto was to always do for others—she offered encouragement to all; inspired confidence that lots could be accomplished if we all work together; visited the shut-ins often; opened her own home for meetings, the Christmas Tea of the WMS group, and even prepared for all these things. Ruth was also active in all our Rodger Geaslen Sunday School class activities.

She was concerned for the salvation of her children, grandchildren, and even the great-grandchildren. Ruth showed her concern for all of her family (personal and church) by her example—not just with words of Bible quotations—she truly lived her life as a Christian, and I know that God welcomed her to heaven with open arms and said to her, "Well done, My Good and Faithful Servant."

Ruth will be missed greatly by us all, but our greatest tribute to her will be to carry on in the same spirit of loving and caring that she has always done.

Mary "Jackie" Rogers

District Doings

The NE Ohio district spring rally was hosted by the ladies of the ASHLAND GARBER CHURCH. Following the breakfast bar, the ladies began to work on a crossword puzzle, "Words to Live By," based on the Bible. Donna Stoffer designed the puzzle. When it was completed, shaded letters spelled out what should intertwine our lives (prayer). Sue Ellen Ronk read a humorous story about weddings by Robert Fulghum, and music was presented by Janice Rowsey, Marty Weaver, Bonnie Gibson, and Joanne Kroft.

The speaker was Morven Baker, a mental health therapist, who kindly and lovingly reminded us, "There are no losers with Jesus." After lunch Morven answered anonymous questions.

The district project offering, received by Ohio president Patti Bub, was designated for Todd and Tracy Ruggles in Mexico City.

The officers, chaired by Donna Stoffer, planned the day, and 51 visitors agreed that fellowship, humor, good food, prayer, and Bible study are all good words to live by.

ATTENTION, OHIO SOCIETIES: This is a new address for Patti Bub, the district president: 115 Scott Street, West Manchester, Ohio 45382; telephone: 513-678-4572.

THE SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT WMS president, Susan Kidd, sent the report of the recent conference, held at Mt. Olive Brethren Church in Pineville, Va.

The national theme, "A Legacy of Faith," was tied in with a quiet time of reflection on the women who have been mentors. In the SE district, Virginia Locke and Ruth Stoddard were two special ladies who were also mentors. "Now we are to be the mentors for the younger ladies in our churches, just as these ladies were to us," Susan said.

The district project was an offering for the Southeast Christian Fellowship in Washington, D.C. The special speaker was Nirmala Kumar. She said the letters and supplies they receive from the WMS ladies say, "We are at your back praying for you, so go ahead." She concluded her talk with a question and answer time. One lady asked what was one of the favorite songs of the children in India and Nirmala sang the song and led the women in the chorus of "Hallelu." This was meaningful!

WORLD RELIEF AND SEWING UPDATE

Again, after an exciting response to the Quilt Auction at General Conference, I have many thanks to:

- All of you who have sent quilt squares. Once again, the guidelines for the quilt squares are:

  (1) use all-cotton fabric. Squares should be at least 8½" square with the design less than 8".

  (2) make your designs needlework (embroidery, cross-stitch, applique, pieced, etc.) Do not use fabric paints, etc. The needlework adds to the beauty of the finished projects.

  (3) Squares can be sent anytime to me at 9300 S. St. Rt. 3, Muncie, IN 43702.
- Christina Moyers for her encouragement and for quilting a wall hanging
- Linwood WMS for quilting a wall hanging
- Virginia Hook and Mary Garver for helping so faithfully to set up and dismantle the quilt frame
- Park Street sewing ladies for the use of the quilt frame, scissors, and thimbles
- Milledgeville Brethren Beacons WMS for the beautiful Precious Moments quilt-top and pillow
- Ruth DeLozier for the baby quilt and braided rug
- Nancy Icenhour for the lovely blue and red quilt
- All the ladies who quilted at Conference
- Vera Shultz for helping to put on the binding
- Tom McConahay for being our auctioneer.

  The $900 from the Quilt Auction will be used for the work in Peru in a new area of Lima.
- Marjorie Bennett for typing the Service Guide

In your Service Guide, please add these items requested for Ken and Carolyn Solomon in Colombia (p. 4): pictures of service people (doctors, nurses, firemen), fruits, vegetables, flowers, people of the world, etc. They prefer pictures which can be copied and used again.

God bless you,

Joan Merrill

Missionary Miscellany

The Ohio District is starting a new church in Medina, and the first service is planned for November 13. Tom and Debbie Sprowls are the pastoral family. The Phone's for You campaign produced a mailing list of many who are not active in a church. These are Tom and Debbie's "new neighbors" and are the basis for visitation. Pray for all who are involved with Tom and Debbie, including the new neighbors.

Missionaries-of-November are home mission personnel: Russ Gordon, director; Phil and Jean Lersch and Bonnie Munson at Brethren House in St. Petersburg; and Doran and Nancy Hostetler at the Riverside Christian School in Lost Creek. We are thankful for these who serve God and The Brethren Church in very special ministries.

Phil and Jean Lersch
Bonnie Munson
6301 56th Ave. N
St. Petersburg, FL 33709

Doran and Nancy Hostetler
RCTS
Lost Creek, KY 41348

Add to your prayer list the home mission pastors, also:

Charles and Linda Beekley
8041 Broken Reed Ct.
Frederick, MD 21701

Rickey and Glenda Bolden
3140 Q St. SE
Washington, DC 20020

Todd and Princene Bonnett
1034 Walcrest Drive, Rt. 13
Mansfield, OH 44903

Tom and Tiona Conrad
430 N. Madison, No. 3
Greenwood, IN 46142

Mario and Laura Fuentes
3018 E. Del Mar Blvd.
Pasadena, CA 91107-4423

Mark and Chantal Logan
Rt. 1, Box 26
Bridgewater, VA 22812

Jim and Ann Miller
1907 E. 116th St.
Carmel, IN 46032

Archie and Connie Nevins
4900 SR 123
Franklin, OH 45005

Daniel and Kathy Rosales
3150 44th St.
Sarasota, FL 34234

Kerry and Denise Scott
2603 Oak Run Blvd.
Kissimmee, FL 34744

Tom and Debbie Sprowls
836 Weymouth Rd.
Medina, OH 44256

David and Jill Stone
1310 E. Bloomingdale Ave.
Valrico, FL 33594

David and Dawn West
P. O. Box 35024
Tucson, AZ 85740

And the Chaplains:

Daniel and Ann DeVeny
112 Coachman Dr.
Yorktown, VA 23693

Joseph and Sara Hanna
127 Cannon Dr.
Traverse AFB, CA 94535-1348

Kenneth and Donna Madison
1920 Shadowood Dr.
Columbia, SC 29212-2056

Thomas and Pat Schultz
10591 Bernice Circle
Cypress, CA 90630

The December missionaries-of-the-month are national missionaries: Sonia and Miguel Antunez in Peru and Antonio and Beatriz Anzulovich in Paraguay. Often the national missionaries struggle with political unrest, old habits, culture, and family differences. Pray for their faithfulness, strength, protection, commitment, and guidance through difficult circumstances. We thank God for His care.



The Editor's Ending

Dear Friend,

During the summer, the executive board studied the WMS Constitution and realized a few changes should be made. Perhaps you have noticed something that should be considered, too. As you refer to the Constitution and question an item, please send your thoughts and ideas to your district president. The Board will continue its study. The tentative plan is to present the revisions at the next WMS conference.

Since both Shirley and I have mentioned this, you can tell it is an important item of business.

Alphabet games are easy, educational, and thought-provoking. Alphabet games are also fun! Probably you do something similar in the car with children. Try an alphabet prayer with them or use this around your Thanksgiving table. And insert your own name at the appropriate letter; be thankful for yourself.

In the season of giving, consider what Billy Graham said: "God has given us two hands—one to receive with and the other to give with." In giving, it is also necessary to receive—which is very difficult for many of us. However, if one doesn't receive, the giver cannot complete his opportunity. The joy of giving is completed when there is the joy of receiving.



God gave His Son and, when we believe, we receive everlasting life. And there will be rejoicing in heaven!

Don't forget to send news. We are all interested in hearing of the new and exciting programs your WMS is doing.

Your friend,

Joan

Joan

God is at Work in Medina

By Tom Sprowls, Jr.

I ENJOY taking time to reflect upon my past in order to see how God has brought me along in life. On April 22, 1991, I was on a plane flying over the Mediterranean Sea on my way back to Germany after the Gulf War had finally ended for me. As I took some time to ponder my future, I made these comments in my final Desert Storm Journal:

> . . . Times were hard as far as living conditions were concerned. The war came and went. The real battle was one of solitude, being with oneself and inner being. My life moves ahead. . . . So one phase of my life ends and another begins for this 30-year-old soldier. What lies ahead of me only God knows. It is in Him that I will trust.

It was November 9, 1990, when I stood in front of the soldiers of my armored cavalry troop and told them that we had been ordered to the Persian Gulf. It will be four years later almost to the day—on November 13, 1994—when I will stand before the people of The Brethren Church of Medina and give the opening message for this new church.

The birthing process

Coming to this point in the birthing of this new congregation has been an interesting process. For a year, a church-planting steering committee worked to tailor a plan to begin a new Brethren church near Ashland, Ohio. As the steering committee began to meet together, time was spent in prayer and in gathering demographic information so that a suitable location for this church could be found.

From the very beginning of the process, the committee specifically eliminated Medina as one of its choices. Two other possible sites were selected and studied. But it soon became obvious that God had a different plan. Over a period of weeks, He led the committee to select Medina as the location for this new church.

A core of volunteers

For me, the most interesting and exciting aspect of getting The Brethren Church of Medina off the ground has been working with the volunteers. We are receiving volunteer workers for a core group for Medina from the local Ashland Brethren churches. Support of various kinds is also coming from the Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Central Districts.

God has called some gifted people to be involved. Their enthusiasm and excitement astound me. Many of them talk about their excitement for the opening service in November. Others are talking and writing to me about what specifically they can do. They are ready to forge ahead in preparation. Workers are planning to participate in and direct the worship service, children's church, nursery ministry, fellowship events, and weekly Bible studies.

God has clearly called these volunteers. When we approached them about helping with this project, we asked them to pray for God's guidance in their call and role of involvement. I can see God's call at work in many of them. Some volunteers plan to drive the 70-mile round trip twice a week in order to be involved in both the Sunday worship service and the mid-week Bible study. One couple is currently looking for a new home, and they are considering moving closer to Medina.

This is the kind of excitement



Tom and Debbie Sprowls

that has helped my wife and me to remain upbeat. It was hard for us to leave our home in Ashland and to move to Medina. A move is always a rough transition. Finding a place to live, searching for a new job for my wife, getting familiar with the Medina community, getting started in my final year of seminary studies, and continuing with the preliminary work of planting a church have made life a bit unsettling.

What lies ahead?

What lies ahead for The Brethren Church of Medina? What will be the response at the opening service? What people will God bring to the door of the new church? What will be the needs of those people? What is God's plan and vision for the new Brethren Church in Medina? I don't know! But I do know God will be faithful to us as long as we continue to forge ahead in faith and do the work to which He has called us.

So one phase of life ends and another begins for this 33-year-old soldier of God. What lies ahead of me only He knows. It is in Him that I will trust. [✝]



What's at STAKE in Florida?

By Kerry Scott

THOSE OF US who have relocated to the Orlando/Kissimmee, Florida, area wish to thank the Lord for His faithfulness and protection in helping us make the move to this new ministry area. We also wish to thank the Brethren for their prayer-support and words of encouragement.

You have been hearing much about this new effort to plant Brethren churches in one of the most rapidly-growing areas of the United States. We want to update you on what God is doing.

All of the initial volunteers are now in place. There is much for which to praise God. They all arrived safely. The transition was smooth in so many ways. And the work of evangelism is already beginning. Any important work will face challenges, and STAKE (Saturation of the Target Area for Kingdom Extension) is no exception. While we have many praises, continued prayer-support is still essential. The tentmaker volunteers realize their dependence on your prayers.

Most of us have found at least temporary jobs. Linda Yoder is working as a driver's license examiner. Enid Schrader is employed at a day-care center. Dawn Kidd works in the bakery department at a Publix supermarket. Annalee Hover has a temporary job at a Taco Bell until she can find more permanent work as a lab technician.

Robert Geddes is working as a maintenance person at an apartment complex. Vanda Funkhouser is teaching at a large Christian school in the area. And I am working currently for a title company and studying for a position with IDS Financial Services. Mark Ray is the only one who has not found work as of this writing.



Kerry and Denise Scott with (l. to r.) Kenton, Kyle, and Kristin.

Our first group meeting was on September 22. Please pray for the necessary unity of the Spirit and wisdom as we begin laying one spiritual brick at a time in the building of this body of believers, with Jesus Christ as the Cornerstone. Pray as well that we will be effective and bold in our witness to others. We believe this church will be built not by what we do, but by Whose we are! We desire to be the "aroma" of Christ to those around us (2 Cor. 2:14, 15). [⇧]

Setting-Apart Service Held For STAKE Team Members

Bradenton, Fla. — A setting-apart service for members of the STAKE Home Missions Team was held September 11 at the Bradenton Brethren Church by the Florida District. Eight of the nine team members were present for the service.

The STAKE tentmakers had been commissioned at General Conference in August, but the Florida District also needed an opportunity to recognize them and to show its support for their church-planting efforts in the Orlando, Fla., area. This service also gave Vanda Funkhouser an opportunity to experience this type of service, since she was unable to attend General Conference.

Each of the district churches provided special music for the service. Not to be outdone, the STAKE team also presented special music, with team member Mark Ray playing guitar and singing. During the actual setting apart, the tentmakers knelt before the gathered Brethren, and the elders in attendance laid hands on them and asked for God's blessing and power to be upon them.

Each of the tentmakers received a polo shirt with a picture of an explorer's sailing ship on it. Above the ship was the word "STAKE" and below the ship the challenge to "Get out of the boat!" This logo was in reference to an illustration used at the General Conference commissioning service, in which the tentmaker's step of faith was compared to Peter's, when he trusted Jesus enough to get of his boat and walk on water. [⇧]

New Windows Add Beauty, Present Message At Waterloo's Hammond Ave. Brethren Church

The following article appeared in the September 30 edition of the Waterloo *(Iowa)* Courier *and was written by* Courier *staff writer Jackie Young. It has been edited for use here.*

Waterloo, Iowa — Hammond Avenue Brethren Church may seem a little more like home to some of its members now that stained-glass windows have been added to its sanctuary.

When the First Brethren Church of Waterloo and the City Church of the Brethren merged in January 1993, members of the First Brethren Church left behind a building with beautiful stained-glass windows.

Some members of that church still may not have adjusted to leaving behind a building their congregation had occupied for nearly 80 years, church leaders say. But the church building at 1604 Hammond Avenue now has stained-glass windows with medallions depicting 12 scenes from the New Testament, which match the church's theology. "We're basically a New Testament church," said Rev. Gene Burry, co-pastor, with Rev. Ronald L. Waters, of the church.

The idea for the window project came from LeRoy Lamb, a member of the church's property commission. Burry helped sell the idea to church members and oversaw efforts to raise $23,800 for the project. All of the money was raised without dipping into the church's general budget, Burry noted.

The windows, which were designed, fabricated, and installed by Built to Last Stained Glass of Cedar Falls, represent a blending of the Victorian and contemporary eras. David Nims of BLSG worked closely with Burry, and a team of about eight people from the business worked on the project over about a five-month period, finishing at the end of August.



One of six large stained-glass windows in the Hammond Avenue Brethren Church sanctuary. Each window has two medallions depicting scenes from the life of Christ.

Small ruby-red pieces of glass are positioned to draw attention to medallions depicting major events in the life of Jesus Christ. Smaller windows above and beside the main panels depict religious symbols suggested by Burry and designed by Nims. They include a dove, open Bible, cross, bread and cup, crown, and hands holding a large bowl. As an added touch, the stained glass is set into wood frames that match the pews, making the sanctuary "a unified whole from a design standpoint," Nims said.

Burry and Waters say that the church, which averages about 130 in attendance at Sunday services, isn't anticipating that the new windows will attract new members. But Burry hopes that the stained glass will create a "more worshipful" environment in the sanctuary. Before, the church had clear, opalescent glass.

A dedication service for the new stained-glass windows will be held during the morning worship service on Sunday, November 20. Also to be dedicated on this date are a new exterior sign, an $80,000 expansion of the church parking lot, and a music stand. In addition to the dedication, this will be an opportunity to say "Thank you" to the church volunteers and donors who made these improvements possible. These projects should help position the church for future growth in its membership, Burry said.

In addition, the November celebration will again pay tribute to the merger of the two churches. While successful, this merger has not been without its problems. Rev. Waters compares the situation to a second marriage in which both spouses bring with them children from a previous marriage. Nevertheless, both pastors say that there is much to celebrate.

"We're looking forward to dedicating [the new church windows and other facility improvements] to the Lord's honor and glory," Waters said.

Brian Bolinger Becomes Pastor Of Flora First Brethren Church

Flora, Ind. — Brian Bolinger became the new pastor September 1 of the Flora First Brethren Church.

This is the first pastorate for Bolinger, who is a 1994 graduate of Ashland Theological Seminary. As a seminary student, he served for two years as Outreach Coordinator for the University Church in Ashland. He also has a B.S. degree in education from Ashland University, and was employed for several years between college and seminary.

He is the son of former Brethren missionaries Rev. Larry and Rose Bolinger,



and he spent his early years in Nigeria. He is married to the former Lori Baldridge of Plymouth, Ohio, who also has a B.S. degree in education from Ashland University. They are the parents of three sons, Daniel (5), Jonathan (3), and Benjamin (1½).

— reported by Mildred Mullendore

Filipino/American Couple Joins Deacon Board At the Stockton, California, Brethren Church

Stockton, Calif. — Audie and Pat Urbano were ordained on Sunday afternoon, October 16, to the deacon board of the Stockton Brethren Church.

Of special interest about this ordination is that both Audie and Pat are first generation Filipino/Americans. They are the first Filipino/American deacon couple in the Stockton Church (and probably in any Brethren church!). Approximately one-third of the Stockton congregation is of Filipino background.

Pat is the daughter of Stockton members Melchor and Grace Tolentino. Her father is a trustee for the Stockton congregation, and her mother serves as Sunday school superintendent. Audie is the son of Esther C. Urbano, who also attends the Stockton Brethren Church. (His father is deceased.) Pat and Audie are the parents of two children, Alexander Simon and Alysha Casandra.

A highlight of the occasion was the presence from the Philippines of Augie and Josie de Vera. Mrs. de Vera was Pat's first Sunday school (nursery) teacher in the Philippines before Pat's family moved to the United States. The de Veras made a special trip to Stockton to be present for the ordination service.



Stockton's new deacon couple, Audie and Pat Urbano

Rev. David Cooksey, Director of Pastoral Ministries for The Brethren Church, delivered the message for the service and conducted the ordination. He was assisted with the ordination by Rev. Randy Best, pastor of the Stockton Church, and by Rev. Roger Stogsdill, pastor of the neighboring Northgate Community Brethren Church.

Also participating in the worship service were Marshall Lehr, moderator of the Northern California District of The Brethren Church, who brought greetings; Deacon Harlan Lawrence, who gave the invocation; Deaconesses Karen Best and Avis Lawrence, who read scripture; and Stockton Moderator Wes Steyer, who read the call to ordination. Special music was presented by Eunice Oh, choir director for the Stockton Church. Brad Harnden of the Northgate Church played the prelude and postlude.

The service was well attended, with guests from the Northgate Community Church and the Gospel Mission, as well as relatives and friends of both Pat's and Audie's families. A dinner/reception in honor of the Urbanos, featuring Filipino food, followed the service. This was followed, in turn, by an informal singspiration.

— reported by Hope O. Rigunan

Video Course is Planned On Brethren Distinctives

Ashland, Ohio — The Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication of the General Conference Executive Council has announced plans for the development of a video course on Brethren distinctives.

The new course will join the six video courses currently available, which were developed jointly by the denomination and Ashland Theological Seminary, namely: *Theology for Life, Knowing the Word's Worth, Highlights of Church History, Exploring the Biblical World, Christian Ministries in the Local Church,* and *Tools for Biblical Study.*

The course will consist of 13 video segments of about 15 minutes each, focusing on topics such as the following: Who are the Brethren?; Brethren history; Brethren denominations; Brethren polity; the Brethren approach to faith and life; the Bible; salvation; the church; discipleship; Brethren ordinances; the "three negatives" (nonconformity, nonswearing, and nonresistance); and Why should we be Brethren?

The course is intended for use in Sunday school classes, membership or pastor's classes, small group study, and individual study. Learning activities will be included with the video segments for classroom use. The video segments can also be separated from the course for use in workshops and seminars.

The course is intended for Brethren people, but it could also be used as an outreach tool. In particular, the first and last videos, which will give an overview of the Brethren and ask what is special about the Brethren, could be displayed at conferences or seminars or shown to church visitors.

The videos will be professionally produced and will have a variety of formats, including interviews, narration over visuals, film of contemporary practice, and perhaps lectures. As part of the videos, the committee would like to include interviews with Brethren who show in their lives the beliefs, commitments, and practices that make us Brethren. Anyone who has suggestions about people to interview should send the names and addresses of those people to the Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication in care of the EVANGELIST.

Although both The Brethren Church and Ashland Theological Seminary will probably contribute funding for the video course, additional support is welcome. Anyone who wishes to contribute to this project should contact the committee in care of the EVANGELIST.

Information about the six existing video courses can be obtained from Ashland Theological Seminary.

— Dr. Brenda Colijn

Peace Task Force and Interest Group Being Formed

A Peace Task Force is being formed to promote discussion, reflection, and action on peace-related issues. The Task Force is being organized by Chantal Logan and Jeff Weidenhamer. In addition to the Task Force, which will consist of five members with responsibilities for Task Force activities, other interested Brethren are welcome to join the Peace Interest Group, which will dialogue with Task Force members and discuss peace issues.

Brethren interested in serving on the Task Force or in joining the Interest Group are encouraged to contact Chantal Logan, Rt. 1, Box 26, Bridgewater, VA 22812; or Jeff Weidenhamer, 515 Chestnut St., Ashland, OH 44805.

GCEC Adopts Statement of Support For Sale of Brethren Retirement Home

Ashland, Ohio — The General Conference Executive Council (GCEC) at its October 14 meeting adopted a statement of support for the sale of the Brethren Health Care Center in Flora, Indiana.

Representatives of the Brethren Health Care Center (known formerly as The Brethren's Home) met with GCEC to explain their rationale for selling the center.

First steps toward separating The Brethren's Home from church ownership were begun as early as May 1987, according to the minutes of the Benevolent Board of The Brethren Church. These discussions began after the Cambria County (Pennsylvania) Court of Common Pleas handed down a directed verdict in favor of the Benevolent Board and The Brethren Church as defendants in a lawsuit. The suit related to a failed effort to build a health care and retirement center in Vinco, Pennsylvania. The Benevolent Board was concerned that any liability suits against Brethren health care centers in the future could lead to the Benevolent Board and The Brethren Church being named as defendants.

These discussions were advanced by a proposed merger of cooperating boards of General Conference. In anticipation of that proposed merger, the Benevolent Board asked the boards of directors of Brethren's Home, Flora, Indiana, and Brethren Care, Ashland, Ohio, to change their articles of incorporation and code of regulations to become not-for-profit corporations no longer owned by the Benevolent Board or The Brethren Church. The Benevolent Board, as owner of the two health care centers, had authority as a cooperating board of General Conference to take that action. The Benevolent Board approved the revised documents for Brethren's Home at its August 1, 1988, meeting.

Brethren Health Care Center has operated independently from The Brethren Church since that time. The board has retained a provision, however, that at least seventy percent of the members of the board must also be members of a Brethren church.

During the presentation to GCEC on October 14, Brethren Health Care Center president Dean Beckner and board member Raymond Morrow reported that, at present, the Indiana facility has only four Brethren residents in its 100-bed nursing center. Reasons for proposing the sale include the current regulatory situation; the fact that the fees for over half the residents are provided by Medicaid; maturity of long-term bonds at the end of December; difficulty in securing replacement members for their board; questions about the viability of expanding the facility; and the rural location of the center.

Beckner and Morrow reported that, in light of these issues, the members of the not-for-profit Brethren Health Care Center board believe it is in the best interests of the residents to sell the facility to a buyer who will continue to operate it in a manner consistent with Christian care and compassion. Therefore, the members of the board have proposed buying the facility from the not-for-profit corporation.

Valuation of the facility will be determined by an independent certified public accounting firm to avoid a conflict of interest for the board members. Proceeds from the sale will be used to benefit The Brethren Church. Estimated date for the sale is December 31, 1994, with payments to be made over a period of years.

In the statement adopted on October 14, GCEC expressed "its support for the disposition of Brethren Health Care Center in this way because it will best serve the residents and the interests of the church." Recognizing that the board of directors of the Brethren Health Care Center had authority to take this action without approval of the church, GCEC went on to say, "We also commend the directors for seeking our counsel on this matter even though not required by law to do so."

Other meeting highlights

— Approved up to $15,000 for production of a 13-session video training package on Brethren history and distinctives. *(See opposite page.)*

— Reviewed comments on the 1994 General Conference, considered the first draft of the 1995 Conference schedule, and appointed a committee to study sites for the 1997 Conference in Indiana.

— Discussed a compilation of comments recorded during the Thursday morning General Conference small-group discussions on organization and finances. GCEC will hold a joint meeting with the Missionary Board on November 11 to discuss further the implications for future organization for The Brethren Church National Offices.

— Received reports from staff members and the National Leadership Council.

The next regular meeting of GCEC will be held in Ashland on December 2.

— Ronald W. Waters

VBS Challenge Results in Pastor Getting "Plastered"

Berlin, Pa. — Pies came flying at Rev. Bryan Karchner, pastor of the Berlin Brethren Church, as a result of a challenge he made to that congregation during this past summer's vacation Bible school.

Rev. Karchner told the congregation that if 175 people attended the Bible school, held July 25–29, the person who brought the most guests would get to throw a pie at him. Then he went a step farther and told the children and adults that if they broke the 200 mark in attendance, then everyone present on the final night could throw a pie at him.

The congregation met the challenge, with 209 people present during the week of Bible school. So on the closing night, Pastor Bryan got plastered with nearly 200 pies.

According to Berlin Sunday school superintendent Scott Landis, "This year's V.B.S. was one of the greatest in the history of the Berlin Brethren Church. Much of the success was due to the tremendous coordination among the teachers, helpers, and Bible school coordinator." Perhaps Rev. Karchner's challenge played a part in it too!

— reported by Scott Landis



Berlin Pastor Bryan Karchner prepares to receive a pie in the face from Kelly Courtney.

Missionaries Allen Baer and the Kumars Put Spotlight on Missions at Masontown

Masontown, Pa. — Brethren mission work in Argentina and India was in the spotlight at the Masontown Brethren Church on Sunday, July 24, when Brethren missionaries Allen Baer and K. Prasanth and Nirmala Kumar visited the congregation.

Allen spoke about The Brethren Church in Argentina to the combined adult classes during the Sunday school hour, and Prasanth presented a message about the Brethren Mission in India during the worship service. Following the services, members of the congregation enjoyed an opportunity to visit with all three missionaries during a carry-in dinner.

After the meal, Allen and the Kumars spent part of the afternoon going through several boxes of Sunday school literature that had been donated by a local bookstore (Colorama) to the Masontown W.M.S. for use in missions. Both the Kumars and Allen Baer found literature that would be useful to them in their respective countries of ministry.

Thus, in addition to being blessed by the messages of Allen and Prasanth during the Sunday school hour and the morning worship service, the Masontown Brethren, with the help of Colorama Bookstore, were able to bless the ministry of these missionaries.

— reported by Pastor Curt and Marsha Nies



Sorting and packing Sunday school materials are (l. to r.) Missionary Allen Baer; Masontown Pastor Curt Nies and his wife, Marsha; and Missionaries Nirmala and K. Prasanth Kumar.

Rebecca Logan Serving on Peacekeeping Team in Haiti

Bridgewater, Va. — Rebecca Logan, a member of the Bethlehem Brethren Church, has been in Haiti since July, serving as a member of a Christian peacekeeping team.

Rebecca, 22, daughter of former Brethren missionaries Rev. Mark and Chantal Logan, is trying, along with other volunteers sponsored by Mennonite and Church of the Brethren organizations, to help restore peace in Haiti through nonviolent tactics such as prayer vigils.



She is living in St. Helen, a district of Jeremie, a southern coastal city east of Port-au-Prince. Other Christian peacekeeping teams (CPT) are scattered throughout the country. Rebecca was assigned to Father Pe Samdi, a Catholic priest in charge of the St. Helen parish. CPT members were assigned to work closely with ministers and priest so that the military government and its supporters would not harm these Haitian church leaders.

The teams also disseminate information about beatings of Aristide supporters. Rebecca sends information—via mail and computer E-mail—to Christian agencies in the United States.

CPT members are in Haiti without the protection of the U.S. government. Rebecca, who has both French and American passports, entered Haiti on her French passport.

Members of the peacekeeping teams are vulnerable to attacks by supporters of the ousted military government if they are seen as a threat to these supporters. But team members try to stay clear of partisan involvements.

Rebecca's mother, Chantal Logan, says she would like to have her daughter home, but believes God will protect the young woman. Mrs. Logan admits that most people, including many Christians, do not understand why she would want her daughter to remain in Haiti.

"I believe in what she's doing. When you teach your kids to trust God, they believe you and act on it. That is the way we choose to live our lives," she said.

The Logans are not strangers to violence. They spent 15 years (1975 to 1989) as Brethren missionaries in South America, including time in Bogotá, Colombia. Her daughter is able to deal with violence because she has seen it before, Mrs. Logan said.

Rebecca is planning to stay in Haiti through November.

— Taken from an article about Rebecca that appeared in the Sept. 16 edition of the Harrisonburg, Va., Daily News-Record *written by* News-Record *staff writer Julie Collins.*

New Association Seeks to Give Christian Alternative to AARP

St. Charles, Ill. — Is there need for another organization like AARP in America? The Christian Association of PrimeTimers (CAP) believes there is!

CAP provides a number of products and services needed by older Americans, but with a difference. In addition to offering significant savings on products that people 50 and above typically need, CAP unashamedly provides its members spiritual inspiration and encouragement, as well as opportunities for life-enriching Christian service,

"It is estimated there are now 63 million people, age 50 and above, and that in 20 years the number will double," said Dr. Billy A. Melvin, executive director for the past 28 years of the National Association of Evangelicals, who serves as chairman of the CAP board. "We want to challenge Christians in this segment of our population to live purposeful lives and share the talents and gifts God has given them for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom."

CAP members receive an inspirational magazine and a newsletter; qualify for discounts on travel, Bibles, and Christian books; and have access to a no-annual-fee credit card, to exceptional CAP-negotiated rates on insurance, and to low-cost prescription drugs by mail.

For additional information about CAP, call 1-800-443-0227 (toll free).

Roanoke, Ind., Brethren Church Makes Effort To Increase Its Visibility in the Community

Roanoke, Ind. — Realizing from their Passing On the Promise growth workshop that they needed to be more visible in their community, members of the Roanoke Brethren Church made their presence known at the recent Roanoke Fall Festival.

The most visible part of this presence was the church's float in the festival parade. The float featured an eight-foot tall apple on which was printed the words, "O LORD, keep me as the apple of your eye," from Psalm 17:8. This same verse was printed on rulers that church members passed out to people in the crowd along the parade route. An apple was chosen for the float in recognition of the success the Roanoke Woman's Missionary Society has had the past several years in selling apple dumplings at the festival.



Roanoke Brethren Church float—making the church more visible in the community.

Another part of the church's presence at the festival was a church softball team, which participated in the festival softball tournament. And individuals from the church made their presence known by wearing church T-shirts.

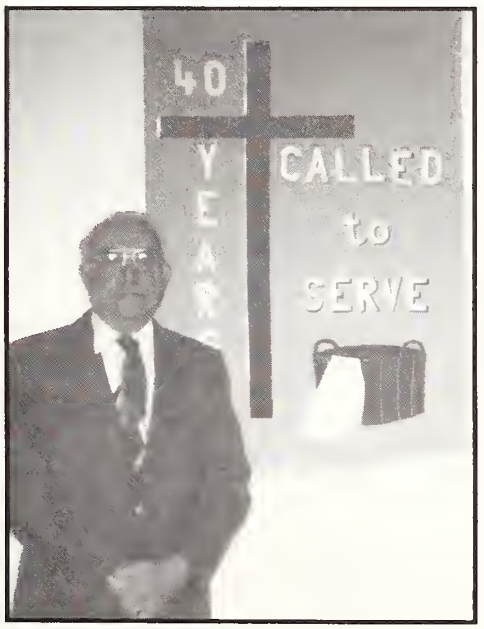
As a result of this year's efforts, the Roanoke Brethren are already talking about a repeat performance next year.

— reported by Sharon Williams

Rev. Claude Stogsdill Honored For 40 Years of Pastoral Service

Monticello, Ind. — Rev. Claude Stogsdill, along with his wife Jane, was honored on Sunday morning, September 11, in recognition of his 40 years in the pastoral ministry.

The recognition program for Rev. and Mrs. Stogsdill was held at the Guernsey Church of the Brethren, where Rev. Stogsdill now pastors. But most of his years of ministry were spent in congregations in The Brethren Church.



Rev. Claude Stogsdill with banner honoring him for his 40 years of pastoral service.

The Stogsdills were honored at the conclusion of the morning worship service, when they were presented a banner that read "40 Years; Called to Serve." A carry-in dinner in their honor was held following the worship service. Joining the Stogsdills and the Guernsey congregation at this dinner were members of the Pike Creek Church of the Brethren congregation, which Rev. Stogsdill also pastors.

Attending the morning worship service at the Guernsey Church were all six of the Stogsdills' children—Sheryl (Spurrier), Don, Kerry, Teresa (Mitchell), Doug, and David—as well as their 16 grandchildren. This was the first time in 22 years that all six children were able to attend a regular church service with their parents.

A native of Illinois, where he attended the Cerro Gordo High School, Stogsdill (67) served in the Navy, attended Ashland College, and also took courses from Moody Bible Institute and the American Bible Institute. He was ordained September 5, 1954, at the Cerro Gordo Brethren Church, with his brother, Rev. Clarence Stogsdill, and Rev. Wilbur Thomas officiating. In his forty years of ministry he served Brethren congregations in Carleton, Neb.; Mathias, W.Va.; West Alexandria, Ohio; Teegarden, Ind.; Warsaw, Ind.; and the Loree Brethren Church near Bunker Hill, Ind. He assumed the pastorates of the Guernsey and Pike Creek Churches of the Brethren in October 1991.

Global Hunger Fact

Worldwide, more than 1.3 billion people live on the equivalent of less than 1 dollar a day. Seven hundred million of these people are desperately poor and chronically hungry.

— World Bank and U.N. Development Program

Three Journalism Scholarships

The Evangelical Press Association announces three writing/journalism scholarships for the academic year 1995/96.

For more information and an application, write to: Scholarships, Evangelical Press Association, 485 Panorama Rd., Earlysville, VA 22936.

Completed applications must be received by March 15, 1995.

epa EVANGELICAL PRESS ASSOCIATION

Brethren Hispanic Pastor Daniel Rosales Completes Preaching Mission in Spain

Sarasota, Fla. — Rev. Daniel Rosales, pastor of Iglesia Hispana de los Hermanos (Hispanic Brethren Church) of Sarasota, Fla., spent September 16–29 on a preaching mission to Spain.

While in that country, he preached at services in Madrid, the capital of Spain, and also in Barcelona. Rev. Rosales's radio program, "Reflexiones," is heard twice a day in Spain, and he receives many letters each week from that country. The general manager of the radio station in Barcelona that airs his program extended the invitation to Rev. Rosales to come to Spain.

Rev. Rosales preached in three services in Madrid. In each of these, the Spirit of God moved and touched lives. Many came forward during the invitation to make decisions for Christ, some crying to accept Christ as their Lord and Savior.

In Barcelona he had the opportunity to preach for four nights. On the first night, as he entered the theatre where the services were held, a young woman came up to him and said, "I'm new here;



it's the first time I've been here. I came to hear the preacher from Argentina who was announced on the radio."

Rev. Rosales, who is a native Argentinean, replied: "Welcome to the service; it's my first time here too. I'm the preacher from Argentina!" The young woman went into the theatre and sat towards the front. About half way through the sermon she raised her hand and said, "I want to ask Jesus into my heart."

Following his first service in Barcelona, Rev. Rosales also did a live radio broadcast from 10:00 p.m. to midnight. He noted that an "astonishing" number of people called in with questions and problems. On Friday afternoon of that week, he did a second live radio broadcast from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. on the subject of depression. Among the people who called in was a woman who had given her life to Satan and who had lived in torment ever since.

"It is surprising to see and hear how the people of Spain have given themselves to Satanism and the occult," said Rev. Rosales. "Spain is the only country that has a monument dedicated to 'the fallen angel' (Satan)." At the final two services in Barcelona, two people possessed by demons manifested their demon-possession during prayer. Rev. Rosales added, however, that "The Lord dealt with them through the power of the Holy Spirit. We praise God!"

Cumulative attendance for the services in Madrid and Barcelona was 1,500, of which 52 came forward to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior and to begin a new life in Him. The services in Barcelona were also televised each night.

Rev. Rosales appeals to Brethren to "continue praying for Spain, that God will send His Spirit upon that country and that many more people will come out of the darkness and into the light of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, Lord and Savior."

An Expression of Appreciation

As pastor and wife and also as parents, we greatly appreciate the ministry of Kids' Conference during General Conference. We had four children in the Conference this year, and it really was a blessing, not only for the kids but also for us as parents. For days our kids went around reciting memory verses they had learned and singing songs from Conference.

On Friday morning leaders of the Kids' Conference filled balloons with helium for the kids, then helped the smaller children write their name and address on one side of a 3" by 5" card attached by a string to the balloon. On the other side the children wrote a message—maybe it was simply "Jesus loves you." At 10:00 a.m. on Friday morning, the children stood on the bridge over Claremont Avenue in Ashland and released their balloons, trusting that someone would find their balloon, read the message attached, and be ministered to by that message.

On Friday, September 16, a package arrived in the mail for our six-year-old son, Nathan. When he returned home from school that afternoon, we gave him his mail. He opened the box and found a Lion King ball and a letter. The letter was from a man in Garrettsville, Ohio. He was working in Medina, Ohio, and while on his lunch break saw a red balloon lying on the ground. He wrote Nathan to say that the card he had attached to that balloon had touched a life many miles away.



Balloon release on the final day of Children's Conference

As parents we were touched deeply by this letter. You see, not only had Kids' Conference given our children something to do while Mom and Dad were in Conference sessions, but the Conference showed our children how to share the love of Jesus with someone else. This is the result of just one balloon that was sent up. We may never know how many of those other balloons touched lives as well.

We want to say "Thank you" to the Kids' Conference leaders James and Aly Pflugfelder and Jennifer Sluss for all the time and effort they put into making Kids' Conference '94 a success!

Pastor Curt and Marsha Nies
Masontown Brethren Church
Masontown, Pa.

Little Crusader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

Hi boys and girls!

My middle son seems to have a difficult time at the dinner table. He will not eat anything made with onions, mushrooms, tomatoes, or oranges. It takes him twice as long to eat because he is busy picking out things he doesn't like. He gets very upset when I fix a meal using these things.

It is so amazing how we take for granted eating three meals a day. If we want a candy bar, we go to the store and buy one. I'm sure that most of us also eat at least one meal a week at a fast-food restaurant.

Many people in the world don't get three meals a day. They do not have the money to go to the store whenever they want to. Nor do they have the money to go out to eat at a restaurant. Do you know any of these people? They may live in your neighborhood or on your street. They may go to your church.

Maybe this year for Thanksgiving you can do something special for these people. You and your parents could go grocery shopping and buy a bag of groceries for them. You could help your mom or dad cook a meal and take it to them at mealtime. You could do a really special thing by taking half of your allowance and using it to buy a gift certificate at a local department store for one of these families.

Doing these things may not seem like much to you. But someone who is in need will greatly appreciate what you do for them. And the next time you say you don't like something, think about your very hungry neighbors. They would be very grateful to eat what you are eating!



Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16–17. God's word says,

"Be _____ always; _____ continually; _____

_____ in all circumstances . . ." (*NIV*).

Use this code to find out what we should remember this year at Thanksgiving.

* = b	% = g	^ = l	[= p	? = u
& = d	! = h	< = n	@ = r	+ = w
# = e	] = i	$ = o	> = s	/ = y

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From The Grape Vine



Five new members of Filipino background were added to the **Stockton, Calif., Brethren Church** recently. Florante and Avelina Miranda and their sons, Daniel and John, who just came from the Philippines last April, joined the church membership through transfer from their home church in the Philippines. Florante is teaching a Filipino Sunday school class and Avelina, Daniel, and John are active in the church choir. Also joining the church (by baptism) was Christopher Oh, a boy of Filipino-Malaysian background. He is the son of Bobby and Eunice Oh, both of whom are active in the Stockton Church (Eunice as choir director). Christopher is a member of the Junior High Sunday school class.

Several Brethren men played a prominent role in organizing and leading a "Share the Vision Rally" held Saturday evening, October 29, in the Ashland University Chapel. Ashland Park Street member **Tim Rowsey** was one of the primary organizers of the event and also presided at the rally itself. **Doug Cooper and the first service worship team** from Park Street Church led the praise and worship segments of the rally. Park Street member **Scot Millhouse** sang a special number. And **Rickey Bolden** pastor of Southeast Christian Fellowship, the Brethren congregation in Washington, D.C., gave the message for the rally. **Robin Roberts** and **Jody Peters** were other Park Street men who had a part in the planning and preparation of the rally, along with numerous laymen from other Ashland churches. Approximately 600 men from Ashland and surrounding areas attended the rally, which was held in support of "Promise Keepers."

Mrs. Freda Eller was honored September 25 by the Flora, Ind., First Brethren Church in recognition of her more than 30 years as a Sunday school teacher. A reception was held in honor of Mrs. Eller and a plaque was presented to her by the Sunday school superintendent in appreciation for her devoted service. Mrs. Eller spent most of her years of teaching in the elementary department of the Sunday school.

Brethren Church member and former pastor **Joseph H. Shultz** is serving on the faculty of Shen-te Christian College in Chungli, Taiwan. He is teaching English classes at the school and helping with some of the worship services.

Youth Pastor Position Available

The Park Street Brethren Church of Ashland, Ohio, is seeking a qualified person to serve in a full-time position as Pastor of Youth Discipleship. Part-time would be considered under some circumstances. A job description for the position is available upon request by phoning 419-289-0224. Those interested in applying should submit their résumés by November 23, 1994. Mail résumés to Youth Pastor Search Committee, Park Street Brethren Church, 619 Park Street, Ashland, OH

World Relief Seeks to Alleviate Continuing Crisis in Rwanda

Wheaton, Ill. — World Relief of the National Association of Evangelicals (WRC) has opened a new office in Kigali, the capital city of Rwanda, to continue ongoing relief work and to expand programs within that country.

The office in Kigali will also serve as a base for Central Africa operations. Interim director Harry Veldstra, from Ontario, Canada, will oversee current programs and future program development.

"Many people think the crisis in Rwanda is either over or impossible to deal with," said David Loudon, World Relief's disaster response director. "It's neither. There's much relief work yet to be done, but we are actively planning the next stages of rehabilitation and reconstruction."

In addition to providing relief supplies and household items to those in need in Kigali, WRC is working with Rwandan church leaders to develop a program to address the need for unifying a church divided along political/tribal lines. This will be a difficult process because of the deep rift that exists between Tutsi and Hutu believers.

There is evidence that Hutu church leaders were guilty of complicity in the deaths of some of the estimated 500,000 Tutsis who were massacred earlier this year. Pastors in Kigali have indicated that these leaders would not be accepted back into the community unless there is an exhibition of true repentance. "Many a church leader handed over innocent people to executors," one Rwandan pastor said. "Lots of . . . Christians compromised their faith and betrayed the Lord."

On the other hand, Hutu pastors among the Rwandan exiles in Zaire who have returned to Rwanda have been viewed by other Hutu exiles as traitors and capitulators to the new Tutsi-controlled Rwanda Patriotic Front government. These exiles have little trust in the present government because of past experience of living under a Tutsi-controlled government, when many Hutus lost their lives.

In addition to its relief and reconciliation efforts in Kigali, WRC is providing support for 326 children in Mubambiro, Zaire—a village where thousands of Rwandan refugees are located. These children, who have lost (by death) or become separated from their families, receive food and medical attention from Zairian nurses.

WRC is working with the International Committee of the Red Cross to register children in the shelters and foster homes so that they can eventually be reunited with their biological families, with extended family members, or with families in their communities. Five children have been reunited with their mothers through this effort. Children in the shelters are also receiving trauma counseling from a pastor from the Community of Baptist Churches in Eastern Zaire (CEBZE).

World Relief is also working with CEBZE in Rwanguba, Zaire, to meet the food needs of approximately 2,300 Rwandan refugees there.

In Memory

Kermit Bowser, 84, October 15. Lifelong member of The Brethren Church of New Lebanon, where he had served as a deacon, moderator, and trustee. Services by Pastor James Black and Rev. Percy Miller.

Elsie Watts, 77, October 8. Member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church. Services by Rev. Garry Guiffrey.

Ethel Sollenberger, 90, October 4. Longtime member of The Brethren Church of New Lebanon. Services by Pastor James Black

Erma Lucille Ball, 81, October 2. Member of the Oak Hill First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor William Skeldon.

Membership Growth

Valley: 2 by baptism

New Lebanon: 1 by transfer

Pleasant View: 1 by baptism

Northwest Chapel: 5 by baptism, 1 by transfer

Communication Technology Leaving Society "Media-Rich and Communication-Poor"

Grand Rapids, Mich. — Modern communication technology, according to a nationally-recognized expert on media, is leaving our society "media-rich and communication poor."

"We live in homes with four or five television sets and 10 or 12 radios and yet there is very little real communication," observes Quentin Schultze, a professor of communication arts and sciences at Calvin College, a Christian liberal-arts school in Grand Rapids. "The average parent in the U.S. spends only 30 seconds a day conversing with his or her child and about 4½ minutes a day talking with his or her spouse."

Schultze is not only voicing lament over such trends. He's also endeavoring to provide a remedy for the situation. It's time, says Schultze in his new book and video series, entitled *Winning Your Kids Back From the Media,* to become wise consumers of the media—and winsome partners with family and friends in conversation.

"Too much leisure time is dedicated to selfish media consumption," he says, "and far too little to precious family conversation, storytelling and listening. I don't think the Christian community understands that through communication we come to know each other—and through knowing each other we come to love each other and the God who made us."

Schultze's book is published by InterVarsity Press of Downers Grove, Ill., and is complemented by a video production with study guide, both of which are distributed by Gospel Films, Inc., of Muskegon, Mich. The video is designed as a five-part series that can be used for family viewing and discussion or for church-based adult classes or special events.

"The people I want to reach most won't read the book," Schultze explained. "Over half the adult population doesn't read books—and they especially ought to get the message that we need to rethink how we use media—and how we allow media to use us."

Schultze said the book and video are "not a wild-eyed attack on media, but an eye-opening look at what's happening to family life, especially in the U.S., in this high tech media world." He calls for families to practice discernment, moderation, balance, and to integrate the use of media as a family activity, rather than as an individual pursuit.

International Prayer Movement to Focus on 100 Cities In the Least-Evangelized Countries of the World

Colorado Spring, Colo. — In October 1993, nearly 21 million Christians from 105 countries joined forces in intense intercession for the least-evangelized countries on the globe, a region known as the *10/40 Window.*

This "window" is a region located from 10 degrees north to 40 degrees north of the equator extending from West Africa to East Asia. The month of intercession for this region was sponsored by the AD 2000 & Beyond Movement, a networking of Christian organizations and individuals that has as its motto "A church for every people and the gospel for every person by the year 2000." *(See page 23 of the October 1994 EVANGELIST.)*

October 1995 has been designated as the date for the second prayer focus on the *10/40 Window.* The United Prayer Track of the AD 2000 Movement has chosen as the target for this prayer effort *The 100 Gateway Cities*—100 cities scattered throughout 64 countries in the 10/40 Window. Most of the 100 are megacities with populations of more than one million people, and many are capitals of their respective countries or provinces. Represented also are the centers of Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Shintoism, Sikhism, and Taoism—religions which dominate this unreached region and hinder the growth of Christianity.

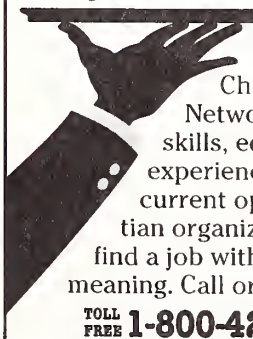
"While God has brought to our attention many important evangelistic targets such as nations and people groups," observed noted author and missiologist C. Peter Wagner, "none takes a higher place on my agenda than cities. I believe that in the 1990s the Spirit is telling the Church that he wants to win the world city by city. God has also provided us some exciting new strategic tools for this crucial task, a chief one being prayer."

More than 30 million Christians worldwide are expected to participate in the October 1995 prayer focus.

EVANGELIST Cassettes Available

The articles in the EVANGELIST are available on audio-cassette. Any sight-impaired person desiring to receive a sound recording of each issue should send his/her name and address to THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST, 524 College Ave., Ashland, OH 44805. There is no charge for this service.

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THE BRETHREN
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DECEMBER 1994





New Addition at Northwest Brethren Chapel

See pages 3 and 14.

Have a *Meaningful* Christmas

By Richard C. Winfield, Editor

A WOMAN, overwhelmed by the Christmas rush, purchased 50 greeting cards without looking at the message inside. She signed and addressed all but one, then dropped them into a mailbox, still not taking time to see what they said. A few days later she glanced at the one un-mailed card. Imagine her dismay when she read:

This card is just to say
A little gift is on the way.

The Christmas season is often a hectic time. Most of us may never make the kind of social blunder this woman made. But it is not uncommon during the Christmas rush to become so harried that we offend family and friends by becoming irritable and impatient.

Slow down

One key, then, to having a more meaningful Christmas is to slow down. "Easier said than done," you may say, "with so much to do and so many activities going on during the holiday season." But slowing down is, in part at least, a matter of mental attitude. It's possible to do things quickly without being in a rush.

It helps to stop and take a deep breath once in awhile. Take time to enjoy the beautiful Christmas decorations while driving. When stuck in traffic, listen to some Christmas music on the car radio. While standing in that long line at the cash register, chat with those standing near you. Share the joy of Christmas with them.

Another way to slow down is by deciding to do less. This requires setting some priorities. The Christmas season offers us a multitude of opportunities—church activities, holiday concerts, Christmas programs, family gatherings, office parties, etc. Each year, it seems, we try to pack more into our schedule than we did the year before.

In order to have a meaningful Christmas, we may need to forgo some of these activities. Even good activities—a Christmas concert, for example—could take up time that might be better spent with family or in preparing one's mind and heart for Christmas.

Focus on the real meaning

Celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ to be the Savior of the world is what Christmas is all about. This is the meaning of Christmas. It stands to reason, therefore, that in order to have a meaningful Christmas, our celebration needs to focus on His birth and what He means to us.

So lest the season get frittered away on less important things, let's examine our Christmas traditions to see if they really center on Christ. If they don't, let's make changes accordingly. Doing so will influence what activities we choose to be part of. It may also influence the kind of Christmas cards we send; the kinds of decorations we use; even the kinds of music we listen to.

Give of yourself

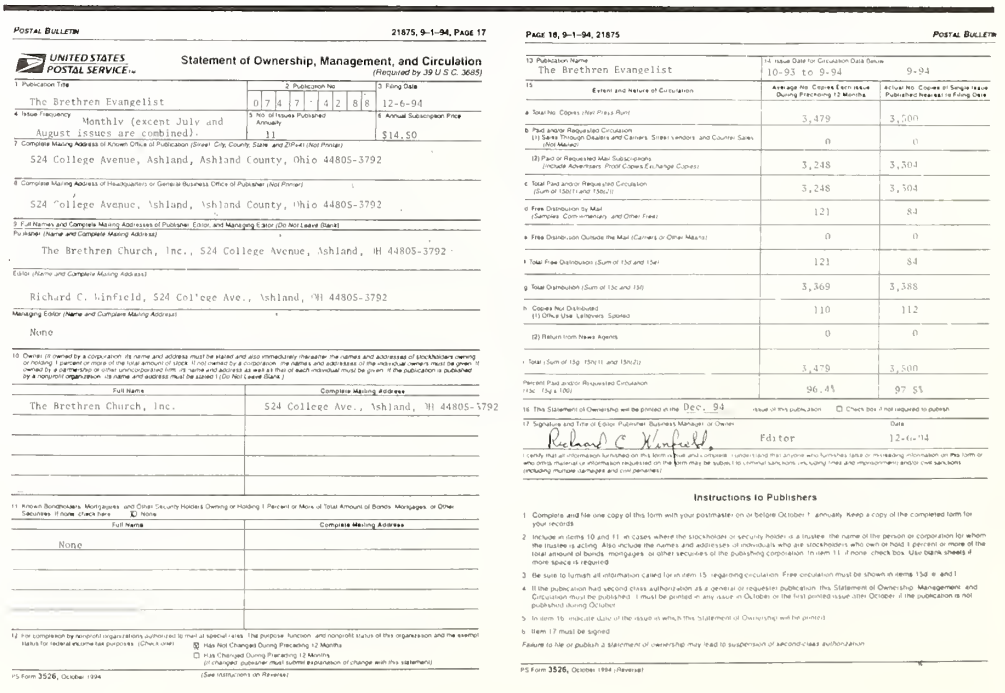
Since giving gifts is such an integral part of our Christmas observance, it figures that our gift-giving will also influence the kind of Christmas we have. What is more deadly to our spirits at Christmas than feeling obligated to buy a gift for someone we don't particularly like, especially if we have no idea what to get that person? On the other hand, what gives us more joy than giving a gift to someone we deeply love when we know just what that person would like?

Most of our gift-giving probably falls somewhere between these two extremes. But to make all of our gift-giving more meaningful, we need to give as Christ gave—of ourselves. This means putting less emphasis on material things and more emphasis on relationships.

An anonymous writer penned these words:

This Christmas mend a quarrel.
Seek out a forgotten friend.
Write a love letter.
Share some treasure.
Give a soft answer.
Encourage youth.
Keep a promise.
Find the time.
Forgive an enemy.
Listen.
Apologize if you were wrong.
Think first of someone else.
Be kind and gentle.
Laugh a little.
Laugh a little more.
Express your gratitude.
Gladden the heart of a child.
Take pleasure in the beauty
and wonder of the earth.
Speak your love.
Speak it again.
Speak it still once again.

If we do these things, surely we will have a meaningful Christmas. [✝]



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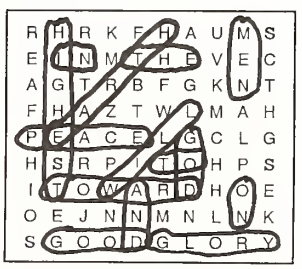
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See the box at the right.





The Christmas Gift

By Alberta Holsinger



IT WAS MY FIFTH CHRISTMAS. Still dressed in my long nightie and rubbing sleepy dust from my eyes, I could hardly believe what I saw beside the Christmas tree. I had not even dreamed of getting such a wonderful gift! It was a doll bed—a dark-brown metal doll bed with a picture on the head and the foot of four spotted puppies happily lapping milk from a large pan.

I ran joyfully to it and inspected it carefully. It was complete with a mattress, two pillows, a sheet, pillow cases, and a blanket. It was just perfect for my two dolls.

My Irenes would love it. (Both of my dolls were named Irene, after a favorite teenage cousin.) I went quickly to get them to show them the wonderful bed.

A part of my daily life

The bed became part of my daily life. I sat on the floor beside it as I dressed my dolls. I made it up carefully many times each day. When I was unhappy, I sat on it with my head in my lap. At bedtime I tucked my dolls in and said, "Sleep tight, Irene."

The next fall I started to school, and the Irenes spent each day in bed waiting for my return. Then we spent happy play hours together.

A favorite toy

Throughout my childhood years it was my favorite toy. A little girl can find so many ways to play with a doll bed. Sometimes I was a nurse and it became a hospital bed. Many times my small dog found himself in the bed with the blanket pulled up to his neck and the instructions, "Now you stay there until you are better." With his big dark eyes following my every move, he stayed in bed until I announced, "Oh, you are better now. You may go out and play." He trotted off, happy, I'm sure, that that ordeal was over for another time.

Sometimes a tiny guest would come to visit, and we would play "house." I was the mother and my baby had to take frequent naps in the doll bed.

When friends my own age came to play, I gladly shared the bed with them for their dolls. I was certain no one had a finer doll bed.

The time came when I no longer played with dolls, and the bed was stored in the attic. I don't know what happened to the Irenes. They probably became so decrepit-looking that, without my knowledge, my parents threw them into the trash.

During the depression years we moved frequently. Many things were lost in the moves. Others were left behind, because there was not room for them. But the doll bed remained safe in the attic of a dear aunt and uncle.

The years passed—high school, college, teaching. Then it was our wedding day. Soon after Bob and I were settled in our home, (you guessed it!) the doll bed came to occupy space in *our* attic.

A new little "mother"

Our firstborn was an adorable son. Little boys much prefer trucks and cars to doll beds, so the bed remained in the attic until our second child, a beautiful little girl, was ready for it.

Then the doll bed moved from the attic to her room. Sometime in the intervening years it had lost its



Raggedy Ann and Andy look as though they would like a nap in Mrs. Holsinger's doll bed.

Mrs. Holsinger is a member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church.

mattress, pillows, and bedding. We made new ones for it. Now our daughter spent many joyful hours playing with the bed.

Just when she outgrew it, our third cherished little one needed a bed for her "babies." So another "mother" took over the duty of tucking dolls in for the night.

All little girls grow up and become interested in more mature things than dolls and doll beds. So back to the attic went the brown metal bed. But that wasn't the end of it. Oh, no, because one day God blessed us with a precious granddaughter. It wasn't long until she needed a doll bed. We spent a happy day making new linens and a blanket. When she went home, she was the proud possessor of a brown metal doll bed with pictures on it of spotted puppies drinking milk. (That pan has never become empty!)

All too soon (it seemed to Grandma) this little girl also began putting away childish things, and the doll bed came home.

As I looked at it, it didn't seem right that something that had given so much pleasure to four little girls should be relegated to the attic. So it now sits in a corner of our bedroom. It's waiting, as am I, for the next little girl. Perhaps she will be another granddaughter, or maybe a great-granddaughter. When she comes, she will have the very finest doll bed in which to tuck her "Irenes."

A more precious Gift

That doll bed was a very special Christmas present. But the most precious of all gifts was the world's first Christmas present, given by God to all people who will accept His love and His Gift.

Like the child in her nightie, when I realized that this Gift was for *me*, I could hardly believe it. I looked it over carefully, and then, with gratitude, I accepted it. The Gift became part of my daily life.

Through the years my Gift has been an understanding Comforter in times of sorrow and disappointment. This Gift has been a delightful Companion in times of joy and gladness. This Gift is my assurance of eternal life in Heaven.

This Gift, too, is to be shared and passed on to others, never to be stored away in the back recesses of my mind. This Gift is always waiting, always wanting to be received. This Gift, of course, is Jesus, God's own Son. This very greatest of all Christmas gifts is also for you. [⇧]

Seeing God's Hand at Work

Spared to Continue to Preach

By Stephen S. Cole

AS I AWAKENED, I became aware of some strange sensations. My back was freezing cold, while the rest of my body was scorching hot. I slowly became aware that I was in a hospital room. As I stirred, a nurse appeared at my side. When I asked the time, she said, "Twelve-thirty." When I made a comment about it being daylight, she told me that it was 12:30 a.m. on Friday morning.

As I lay there, my brain began to process the data. I was in the intensive care unit. Hadn't I come down with what I thought was the flu on Tuesday evening? I remembered being sick throughout the night. What had happened? As I drifted in and out of sleep, I kept wondering.

Later my nurse told me that I had been rushed by ambulance to the emergency room on Wednesday evening. I was delirious with a temperature that eventually climbed to 106.8 degrees and stayed there for a day. At one point the ICU nurses had notified my doctor to come in and put me on a breathing machine, because they believed I was about to die. By the time he arrived, my temperature had begun to drop.

I believe the reason it dropped was because of the many prayer chains, churches, and individuals who went to prayer for me. I had been given the strongest antibiotics available, and yet my life had hung in the balance. It was the prayers of the saints that made the difference.

Peggy, my wife, was there with me all the time. She was supported in the waiting room throughout my coma by Rev. Jerry and Grace Radcliff and by Mable Wilkins. The Friday on which I awakened was an emotional day for us. Late that day our daughter Jennifer received word that she had passed the state math test after eight tries and would be able to graduate from high school. We just cried!

Friday evening, however, my temperature again began to climb—to 105 degrees. I asked my nurse to call Rev. Radcliff and Paul Harsh (one of our deacons) to ask them to come in immediately and anoint me with oil. While waiting for them, I prayed Scriptures and sang hymns silently. They arrived at midnight, and I gave the illness (my left leg below the knee was fiery red and hot with cellulitis) to the Lord. After the anointing, my temperature began a steady decrease until it was normal by Sunday. I remained in the hospital until the following Friday.

Two weeks later I received a call from the ICU asking me to visit a family whose father was dying. In the course of the conversation, I shared how I had been spared from death and that if God chose to heal, he could. We had an intense time of prayer. They told me that I had been spared to spend time with them that night. The father was healed and went home.

I recently preached from 1 Corinthians 9:16 in which Paul writes, ". . . I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!" God spared me to continue to preach and pastor. My life and ministry are a gift.

My illness was not God's fault, but my own. I ate and ate until I weighed 325 pounds, which gave opportunity for my body to be ravaged by infection. I currently have lost 80 pounds. I cannot ignore Paul's warning later in chapter 9 when he says, "I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize." (v. 27) [⇧]

Rev. Cole is pastor of the Newark, Ohio, Brethren Church. The illness described in this article occurred in late April and early May 1994. Rev. Cole is now in good health.

A Quizzical Look at Brethren Leaders to 1880

By Matthew W. Hamel

An opportunity to test your knowledge of leaders who served the Brethren movement before the divisions that began in 1880 and who are therefore part of the historical heritage of all five Brethren groups.

1. One of the most influential Brethren leaders during the second half of the 18th century was Alexander Mack, Jr. A few years after his father's death in 1735, "Sander" (as he was known) joined the Ephrata community. But he eventually left this radical group and served as an elder in what Pennsylvania congregation?

Germantown. Go to 15.

Conestoga. Go to 6.

2. Afraid not. James Quinter was an apprentice of and assistant to Henry Kurtz for a time. He later purchased Kurtz's *Gospel Visitor* and Henry Holsinger's *Christian Family Companion* and combined them into the *Primitive Christian*. Quinter began his service in the church at the age of 22 as an evangelist, but he later became a relentless promoter of higher education and served as president of Juniata College from 1879–1888. Try 23 again.

3. You're barking up the wrong tree. Go back to 27 and try again.

4. Nope. Mack didn't arrive in Pennsylvania until 1729, at which time he assumed the leadership of the already-established Germantown congregation. Do a repeat on 19.

5. Right! Brethren were strongly opposed to slavery. When Weir's owner joined the Brethren in Virginia in 1843, he was required by the church to free his slaves in order to be a member in good standing. A few months after gaining his freedom, Weir likewise joined the Brethren. He was ordained to the eldership in 1881. Onward to 24.

6. You're in the wrong neighborhood. The Conestoga Church was located in Lancaster County, Pa., where it was founded in 1724 by members from the Germantown congregation who had moved to that area. It later split as a result of the divisive influence of Ephrata leader Conrad Beissel. Give number 1 another try.

7. Correct! John Kline took his obligations to God seriously and as a result crossed the military lines between the North and the South in 1862, 1863, and 1864 to attend Annual Meetings. During his travels, he gave medical aid to soldiers on both sides of the conflict. Because of this, Kline was suspected of being a Union sympathizer and was ambushed and shot on June 15, 1864. Continue on to 14.

8. Samuel Weir was an African-American born in slavery in 1812 in Bath County, Va. He was later freed and escorted north of the Ohio River by B. F. Moomaw. In Ohio he became a pastor and later an elder, serving in the Scioto Valley area of Ross County. Weir was freed from slavery:

As a result of the Civil War. Go to 16.

Because his former owner became a member of the Brethren. Go to 5.

9. Not quite. Miller did serve as president of Ashland College, but not until 1894. In 1896 the college closed for two years because of financial woes, but during his 1898 to 1906 presidency, Miller led the school back onto solid financial footing. Look at 21 again.

10. Correct. Peter Becker was one of the initial group of Brethren who came to America, arriving in Penn's Colony in 1719. Becker settled in Germantown, then spent time in 1722 and 1723 traveling among the scattered Brethren seeking to revitalize them. Revival followed, and the first baptism in America was held on Christmas Day in 1723 in Wissahickon Creek near Germantown. Shiver on over to 23.

11. "Write" on! Born in Germany, where he received a classical education, Henry Kurtz came to the U.S. in 1817. He became a Lutheran minister, but joined the Brethren in 1828 and became a Brethren elder in 1844. He ran a printing business in Poland, Ohio, and sought to strengthen ties among the Brethren by publishing the *Gospel Visitor*, the first issue of which appeared in 1851. In 1856 James Quinter became assistant editor of the *Visitor*, and that same year Henry Holsinger (then 22) served a brief apprenticeship with Kurtz. In addition to the *Visitor*, Kurtz published hymnals, a medical guide, and a compilation of writings by Alexander Mack, Sr. Press on to 8.

12. One of the most noteworthy Brethren elders of the mid-1800s was a circuit rider who ministered in the Shenandoah Valley region of Virginia. According to his records, this Brethren churchman may have traveled as many as 100,000 miles, most of it on horseback. His travels included at least three trips across military lines between the North and the South during the Civil War. Who was this man?

Peter Fahrney. Go to 22.

John Kline. Go to 7.

Mr. Hamel, a member of the Johnstown, Pa., Second Brethren Church, currently lives in Ashland, Ohio, and attends the new Brethren Church of Medina.

13. No, Benjamin Bowman had a Brethren background. In fact, he was the author of *A Brief and Simple Exhibition from the Word of God,* a pamphlet that was instrumental in the conversion of Peter Nead to the Brethren cause. Do a repeat on 24.

14. Abraham H. Cassel was a Brethren gentleman who distinguished himself by collecting books. Combing attics and sheds, Cassel, a descendant of Peter Becker and Johann Christoph Sauer, gathered a collection of approximately 8,000 books and 40,000 pamphlets and manuscripts, most of a historical nature and many about Brethren history. His collection included works printed on the Ephrata press and on the press of Benjamin Franklin. He donated books to Bridgewater (Va.) College as well as to Ashland College. The rest of his collection was purchased by interested schools and historical societies. This Brethren bibliophile lived in . . .

Ohio. Go to 30.

Pennsylvania. Go to 25.

15. You're off to a good start! Following his wayward youth, Alexander Mack, Jr., settled down to serve more than 50 years in the Germantown congregation. He was widely known and respected as a historian, poet, letter-writer, and defender of Brethren practices. He is buried in the cemetery adjacent to the Germantown meetinghouse. Go to 19.

16. No, he was freed before the Civil War. Return to 8 and try again.

17. Visionaries within the church sought to expand the mission of the Brethren to other countries. One early promoter of Brethren missionary work was:

Peter Keyser. Go to 26.

D. P. Sayler. Go to 28.

18. Good choice! Kinsey built up a thriving nursery business, with customers from the U.S. and several foreign countries. He successfully developed a new variety of pear (Kiefer) and mulberry (Russian). Head back to 12.

19. Another strong leader during colonial times and the minister who performed the first Brethren baptism in America (in 1723) was:

Alexander Mack, Sr. Go to 4.

Peter Becker. Go to 10.

20. Correct! Peter Nead was born to Lutheran parents at Hagerstown, Md., in 1796. He was led to the Brethren by reading Benjamin Bowman's pamphlet, *A Brief and Simple Exhibition from the Word of God,* and was baptized in the Potomac River on June 14, 1824. He became a staunch advocate of Brethren beliefs and wrote many articles and books in support of those beliefs. On to 27.

21. In March of 1877, at a meeting of the Maple Grove congregation located north of Ashland, Ohio, a decision was made to proceed with plans for a college in Ashland. The first president of this new school was . . .

J. Allen Miller. Go to 9.

S. Z. Sharp. Go to 29.

22. Afraid not. Peter Fahrney was a Brethren herbalist and physician in Maryland who became known as the "walking doctor." His office-laboratory is preserved on the grounds of the Fahrney-Keedy Memorial Home in Washington Co., Md. Turn back to 12 and try again.

23. Periodicals were seen by some in the church as a way of unifying the Brethren, but they were considered by many others as a dangerous innovation. The earliest and most tireless supporter of Brethren periodicals was . . .

James Quinter. Go to 2.

Henry Kurtz. Go to 11.

24. During the period of Brethren history from 1800 to the 1850s, a number of those who became leaders among the Brethren came into the church from other denominations. They were often attracted to the Brethren by their way of life and distinct practices. One such leader was . . .

Benjamin Bowman. Go to 13.

Peter Nead. Go to 20.

25. Good choice! A. H.. Cassel lived in Harleysville, Pa., where his library attracted many scholars. On to 21.

26. No, Peter Keyser was more of a "home missionary," for he began a Brethren congregation in Philadelphia in 1813. He was fluent in both German and English and operated a successful lumber business. "Lumber" back to 17 and try again.

27. Peter Nead's son-in-law, Samuel Kinsey, founded *The Vindicator,* a periodical of the Old Order Brethren before the 1881 division and now the publication of the Old German Baptist Brethren. Samuel and his wife, Barbara, owned a sizable farm next to the Neads, where Kinsey explored his interests in . . .

Animal husbandry. Go to 3.

Horticulture. Go to 18.

28. Yes! Daniel P. Sayler was a circuit-riding Brethren preacher in the Beaver Dam, Md., area. In 1859 he proposed a plan for missionary activity, some parts of which were eventually adopted. Two other notes of interest about Sayler: According to undocumented Brethren tradition, he was a personal advisor to President Abraham Lincoln. And believing strongly in the integrity of Annual Meeting, he argued passionately for the expulsion of Henry R. Holsinger at the 1882 Annual Meeting. Proceed to 31.

29. Move to the head of the class! S. Z. Sharp was an early supporter of higher education and Sunday schools. Well educated, he was instrumental in founding four schools, two of which survive today (Ashland University and McPherson College in McPherson, Kans.). Graduate to 17.

30. No, he wasn't a "Buckeye." Go back to 14 and try again.

31. Congratulations, you made it! If you'd like to know more about these leaders, see the reading list below.

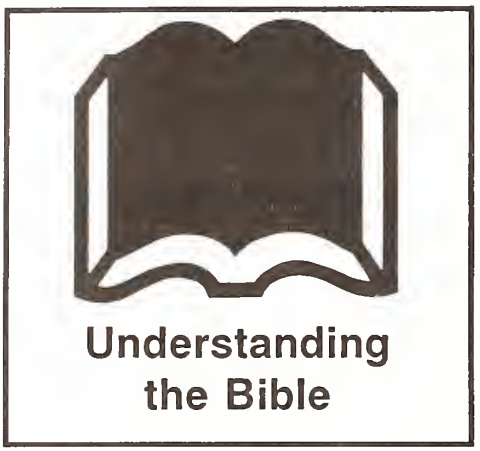
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Freeman Ankrum. *Sidelights on Brethren History*. Elgin: The Brethren Press, 1962.

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Understanding the Bible

Obedience and the Word of God

By William H. Kerner

WE LIVE IN A SOCIETY that has sold out the good of the community in favor of the rights of the individual; a society that perverts justice in order to allow freedom; a society in which how one feels is becoming more important than how one thinks; a society in which many seek pleasure rather than God. In such a society, obedience is not a popular concept. Nevertheless, obedience is a vital ingredient in the love we have for the Lord Jesus Christ, in our interpretation of His word, and in our hope of heaven.

Hearing and obedience

The New Testament word for obedience is *hupakouō*, which means to listen, to submit, to obey. The root of this word also means to hear. So we find that obedience is linked to hearing and responding. When we hear God's promises or commands, we are under obligation to obey their conditions. To hear God's word, then, means to obey God's word.

Note the example of God's covenant with Abraham. "Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness" (Gen. 15:6*). And because Abraham passed the test in regard to his only son, God promised that "through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me" (Gen. 22:18). In these verses we find hearing, believing, and obedience all linked together, and we realize that obedience is an active response to God.

God's covenant with Israel was based on obedience. God spoke through Moses, saying: "See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a course—the blessing if you obey the commands of the LORD your God that I am giving you today; the curse if you disobey the commands of the LORD your God and turn from the way that I command you today by following other gods, which you have not known" (Deut. 11:26–28).

To disobey the commands of God can bring drastic results. When commissioned by God to go to Nineveh and preach God's message, Jonah left immediately for a far country that he might escape the Lord's instructions and discipline. It was only after God dealt with Jonah in an extreme manner that Jonah repented and obeyed.

Jesus, the night before the cross, told His disciples that obedience and love go together. "Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him" (John 14:21). Jesus is saying that obedience and love are so intertwined that they cannot be separated.

Later on in that same discourse, Jesus said to His disciples, "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete" (John 15:9–11).

Salvation and obedience

Obedience to the call of salvation requires that there be both repentance for sin and a turning from it. When Jesus began His ministry, He declared, "The time has come. The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!" (Mark 1:15). Obedience requires a turning from sin. The Apostle Peter states, "Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, and that he may send the Christ, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus" (Acts 3:19, 20).

Obedience is necessary in accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. At conversion, it is obedience that recognizes God's authority and His right to command. It is also the recognition of the love and sovereignty of God in our lives that lets us rest on His promise: ". . . we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28). We see, then, that obedience is not legalism; nor is it doing something to merit salvation. It is what we do out of love for God for what He has done for us in Jesus Christ.

*Quotations from the Bible are from the *New International Version*.

Rev. Kerner is a retired Brethren pastor and formerly served as Director of Pastoral Ministries for The Brethren Church. He serves as a member of The Brethren Church's Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication, which is preparing this series of articles.

Correspondence Welcomed

The members of the General Conference Executive Council's Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication invite readers to suggest topics or Bible passages to discuss in future articles in this column. Send questions, comments, or suggestions to the committee in care of THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST, 524 College Ave., Ashland, OH 44805.

"We see, then, that obedience is not legalism; nor is it doing something to merit salvation. It is what we do out of love for God for what He has done for us in Jesus Christ."

Faith and obedience

The New Testament tells us that "faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see" (Heb. 11:1) Early on, human beings had trouble obeying when they could not see God. Even though God spoke to Eve audibly, it was the Serpent's voice that won her attention and her obedience. Did she more readily submit to the Serpent because she *saw* him but did not see God? If God had appeared in some visible form to Eve, would that have kept her from being deceived? Is seeing really believing?

The disciples of Jesus saw Him after the resurrection in a transformed body, yet Matthew records, "When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted" (Matt. 28:17). Faith does not depend on seeing. In fact, Jesus chided Thomas for needing to see in order to believe: "blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed" (John 20:29b).

Faith, however, does call for obedience. The Apostle Paul says that God's people have a responsibility to "call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith" (Rom. 1:5). Faith is also nurtured by obedience. As Jesus said, "If any one chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own" (John 7:17).

Jesus is our supreme example of obedience:

> *And being found in appearance as*
> *a man,*
> *he humbled himself*
> *and became obedient to death—*
> *even death on a cross*
> Phil. 2:8

And again, "Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him . . ." (Heb. 5:8, 9).

All through Christian history there have been those who have misinterpreted "faith" to be a mere affirmation of words, and "grace" to be a gift without any obligations. We should consider that faith becomes saving faith when validated by obedience. And saving grace is God's free gift only to those who do His will. Jesus made it clear that the only faith that counts is a faith that comes from obedience.

He brought this into focus near the end of the Sermon on the Mount, when he said, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'" (Matt. 7:21–23). When calling Jesus "Lord," we must remember that His lordship is always connected with our obedience to His teachings.

The Brethren and obedience

Alexander Mack, the organizer of the Brethren movement, had a very strong belief that when one becomes a Christian, one takes on a new pattern of life. In other words, with new birth comes new behavior. He believed that the fundamental authority for the church's existence was given by Jesus Christ during His earthly ministry. Therefore, Jesus is to be lord of one's life, and all His teachings are to be lived out in everyday life. Obedience to Jesus' teachings is not burdensome, but rather a willing and joyful experience. Our love for Christ is to be shown in our unqualified obedience to His teachings.

Mack put great stress on love in all areas of the Christian life. Love is the motivating factor for a life of whole-hearted devotion and obedience. Baptism follows conversion as an evidence of obedience. As the sign of that radical inward change of regeneration, it marks the believer's call to a life of obedience and discipleship to Christ.

J. Allen Miller, addressing the subject of obedience, said, "Where there has been a genuine faith and repentance, obedience follows without quibble or hesitancy. There is no referring of duty and no neglect of the commandments imposed. So we find indeed the command to obey the will and commandments of God at the very threshold of salvation. The blessings of salvation do not come to one who knowingly or willfully refuses obedience to the will of God" (*Christian Doctrine*, p. 64).

Obedience to the teachings of Christ is the doorway to spiritual formation in the Christian life. It is necessary if biblical interpretation is to have its proper goal: "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does" (James 1:22–25). [⇧]

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It was their attempt to obey all the commands of Christ that set the early Brethren apart from other Christian groups. Insistence on repentance, separation from the world, simplicity of dress and life, refusal to swear oaths, non-retaliation for evil, non-participation in warfare, no divorce in the church, believer's baptism by trine immersion, the washing of the saints' feet, the Lord's Supper as a full evening meal, greeting one another with a sacred kiss, anointing the sick with oil—all these and more they held to be commands of their Lord to be obeyed as a demonstration of their faith in him.

From *The Message of Faith*
by Jerry R. Flora

Brethren Church Ministries

Introducing:

The Andrew Center

By Ronald W. Waters
Director of Brethren Church Ministries

BEGINNING MARCH 1, 1995, The Brethren Church will become a denominational member of *The Andrew Center for Evangelism and Congregational Growth.* This new partnership offers Brethren churches a unique opportunity for evangelism and outreach support beyond what our national office alone is able to offer.

The Andrew Center was developed by the Church of the Brethren as a follow-up to Passing On the Promise (POtP), the three-year process whereby congregations strategize and equip themselves to reach their communities with the good news of Jesus Christ. As Church of the Brethren congregations were completing the process, they were asking, "What can we do after POtP to keep the spirit of outreach alive?"

More than a follow-up

But The Andrew Center is more than a follow-up to Passing On the Promise. In fact, the center is designed to help any congregation further its understanding of and participation in reaching its community with the saving message of Jesus Christ.

The Church of the Brethren has opened the center to other denominational partners. In addition to The Brethren Church, the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church will become denominational members of the center in March. Other denominations have been invited to join and are considering that possibility.

The Andrew Center is named after the apostle Andrew. In John 1:41 we read that after becoming acquainted with Jesus, "the first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon [Peter] and tell him, 'We have found the Messiah.'" Like its namesake, The Andrew Center is committed to "Bringing assistance to you, so that others might be brought to Christ."

Four types of assistance

The center is designed to offer four types of assistance to local congregations:

Resourcing. The center recognizes that because of the diversity of our cultural settings, no one program or approach will meet the needs of every congregation. So the center offers "a smorgasbord of programs and resources" for the local church.

Resources may be accessed in two ways. First, the center produces an "action guide and catalog" describing resources available through the center. This publication is more than a listing of products and services; it also includes helpful insights and thought starters that may be immediately adapted and applied by the congregation. Resources in the catalog are either produced by the center itself or are carefully chosen for their solid biblical content and application of church growth principles. Many of the materials not produced by The Andrew Center itself are published by the partner denominations.

A second way to access resources is through the Andrew Center Action Line. By dialing the toll-free number, callers may access one or more levels of service. Sometimes resources in the catalog will meet the immediate needs of a caller. If so, the telephone receptionist will take the order and see that materials are promptly mailed to the caller.

At other times, published materials may not be enough. The caller may need to discuss a particular opportunity or challenge facing the local church. In this situation, the inquirer may ask the receptionist to speak to a parish advisor. The parish advisor is a person who has extensive local church experience, has consulted with congregations in a variety of settings, and has had broad training in evangelism and church-growth principles and methods.

Each denominational member is appointing a parish advisor. The Brethren Church Evangelism & Church Growth Commission has appointed Ronald W. Waters to serve in this role. In addition to reaching Ron through the toll-free Andrew Center phone number, Brethren congregations may also talk to parish advisors from other denominations for a "second opinion."

A phone-call away

After March 1, every Brethren congregation may use The Andrew Center's toll-free number to order catalog resources; to talk to Ron Waters about evangelism, church growth, or Passing On the Promise matters; or to connect with another parish advisor.

If the parish advisor cannot himself or herself provide assistance at the level needed by the caller, the advisor will arrange a telephone conversation with Steve Clapp, the senior consultant with The Andrew Center. Steve has had a broad background in a variety of local church settings and has written extensively on evangelism and church growth. Some of Steve's books include *Plain Talk about Church Growth; Fifty*



THE ANDREW CENTER

for evangelism and congregational growth

Ways to Reach Young Singles, Couples, and Families; and *Youth Workers Handbook,* a book Lyle Schaller has called "the best youth handbook on the market."

Churches that become congregational members of The Andrew Center may talk to the senior consultant at no charge. Congregations that are not members of the center will pay an hourly fee for this service.

Consulting. The Andrew Center has entered into agreements with a number of nationally- and regionally-known authorities to be available for on-sight consultations with member congregations. Consultants currently include Herb Miller, executive director of Net Results and successor to Lyle Schaller as parish consultant for Yokefellows; Bill Easum, author, congregational consultant, and 1995 General Conference speaker; J. David Schmidt, strategic planning specialist and founder of a consulting firm that has served major corporations and such evangelical denominations as the Christian and Missionary Alliance; and Bruce Bugbee, formerly of Willow Creek Church and a specialist in spiritual gift discovery and implementation.

Consultants of this stature would generally be unavailable to small and medium-size congregations. Sliding fee scales are available and fee subsidies are possible for member congregations.

Training. With changes coming so rapidly in our world, ministry and outreach skills quickly become outdated. So The Andrew Center is committed to offering high-quality training events at regional locations and at affordable prices. This fall, Steve Clapp of the center presented a one-day workshop on "Reaching Out to Young Families" in six locations across the United States. Other training events, workshops, and seminars are planned for 1995. Member congregations receive a discount on the registration fee.

In addition, The Andrew Center will be a joint sponsor of training events developed by other organizations and partner denominations. Congregational members will be apprised of these events through the center's publications.

Networking. Congregations often need interaction with churches in similar situations. Unfortunately, in smaller denominations such as ours, the number of similar congregations are few or none. Through The Andrew Center, member congregations will have an opportunity to network with churches in similar circumstances from like-minded denominations. Relationships developed can serve the role of encouragement, mutual support, information-sharing, and challenge to move out of comfort zones into new levels of ministry.

Present or future networks may include pastors/staff of larger congregations, ethnic churches, urban churches, and church planters.

Benefits of joining the center

Because of our denominational membership, every Brethren congregation may take advantage of some of the services of The Andrew Center. These include: calling a toll-free action line for resources or to talk to our parish advisor. Churches that become congregational members, however, will have these added benefits for the pastor and for up to twelve members of the congregation (except as noted):

- Telephone consultation with the senior consultant for one person (the pastor or other designated staff or lay leader).
- Discounts of 10 to 20 percent on selected Andrew Center products.
- Discount registration rates on Andrew Center training and networking events.
- Free subscriptions to *New Beginnings* (The Andrew Center journal) and *Up to the Minute* (insider information newsletter and information on center research projects).
- Special invitation to appropriate networking events.

Both the Evangelism & Church Growth Commission and the General Conference Executive Council urge every congregation to take advantage of this special opportunity and to join The Andrew Center by March 1, 1995. [✝]

Membership Fees

Membership fees are very reasonable and are on a sliding scale based on average worship attendance. In addition, The Brethren Church National Office will subsidize up to one-half of the first year's membership fee for congregations in 1995, increasing the savings. This subsidy is made possible through the fair share support for Brethren Church Ministries provided by Brethren churches.

For example, congregations averaging 74 or less would pay only $75 for a one-year membership (compared to $150 normally or $250 for congregations from a non-member denomination). Over fifty percent of all Brethren churches will be able to join at this low rate. Churches in the 75-124 category will pay $100 (compared to $200 or $300, respectively). Larger congregations will pay similarly low membership fees.

Information on joining The Andrew Center has been sent to pastors and other church leaders. If you would like to receive an information packet on The Andrew Center, call 1-800-774-3360. Also, ask for the free book, *Plain Talk about Church Growth* by Steve Clapp.

For more information on Brethren Church membership subsidy, call Ron Waters at 419-289-1708.

Brethren Church Ministries

Announcing:

1995 Brethren Church Summer Ministry Opportunities

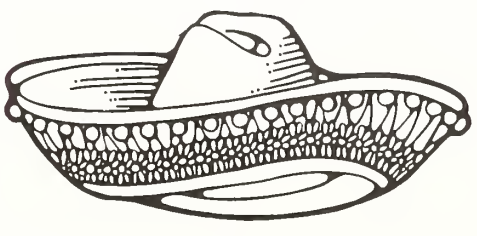
SINCE 1946 The Brethren Church has offered summer ministry opportunities for Brethren young people. These ministry opportunities have included Summer Crusader teams, the Ambassadors Quartets and other musical groups, Crusader Internships, District Crusader teams, and short-term missions trips. Through the years, the emphasis has been on designing ministry opportunities that provide meaningful service while helping young people discern God's call upon their lives to vocational ministry.

Continuing in that tradition, the 1995 summer ministry opportunities for Brethren young people will include three options.

Short-Term Missions Team

The Brethren Church will again send a team of eight young people to Juarez, Mexico (across the border from El Paso, Texas), to work with Youth with a Mission (YWAM). Last summer eight young people and three adult team leaders spent a week in Juarez. Ministries in which they were involved included leading worship and evangelistic services, cleaning and painting a church building, helping YWAM staff construct a new ministry center and free-clinic building, working with children at an orphanage, and distributing Bibles.

Members of this year's team will take part in similar projects. Team members will come to Ashland for a period of training before going to Mexico. June is being considered as a possible time for the trip, but dates are still being negotiated with YWAM.



Young people 15 to 20 years of age may apply to become members of this missions team. Applications will be available from January 1 to January 31, with all materials to be returned **before February 15, 1995.**

Applicants must be persons who have made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ and who evidence a strong commitment to following Him. Preference will be given to those youth who are searching/exploring the possibility of mission service or who have already expressed a desire to serve on the mission field.

Participants on the team will be responsible for raising their own support for the trip (expected to be about $550, plus the cost of traveling from home to Ashland and from Ashland back home).

Young Adult Ministries

In 1995, Young Adult Ministries will replace the traditional Summer Crusader and Crusader Intern programs. Those who apply for this ministry experience will need to complete an extensive application form indicating their particular gifts, interests in types of ministry experiences, and vocational objectives.

For those applicants who are accepted, ministry locations will be selected to match as closely as possible their developmental needs. Some applicants will be assigned to work in small teams while other persons will serve alone. The term of service for each person will be a minimum of five weeks, with no less than two weeks in any one location. Summer-long ministries in one location will be the goal. Because of the length of service involved, participants in Young Adult Ministries will receive a scholarship/honorarium at the conclusion of their term of service.

Field sites being considered include (but will not be limited to) new and established churches, camps, urban ministries, Appalachian ministry locations, retirement centers, and social service organizations. The range of ministry experiences will include pastoral staff, Christian education, youth work, music ministry, refugee resettlement, and administrative tasks. As already noted, placement will be designed to contribute to the spiritual growth and personal development of each individual accepted.

Applicants for Young Adult Ministries must be no younger than high school seniors graduating in 1995. No upper age limit has been established. Applications will be available from January 1 to January 31, and all materials must be returned **before February 15, 1995.**

Those accepted into this program will also participate in an Intro Day, which will be held Saturday, April 8, 1995.

District Crusaders

The Brethren Church and district boards of Christian education will again jointly sponsor District Crusader teams during the summer of 1995. Brethren high school students ages 15–18 who will have completed grade ten, eleven, or twelve by summer 1995 are eligible to apply.

District Crusader teams vary in

"Through the years, the emphasis has been on designing ministry opportunities that provide meaningful service while helping young people discern God's call upon their lives to vocational ministry."

size, with four members being the targeted number. Teams work under the supervision of a coordinator chosen by the board of Christian education of the host district. District Crusaders normally serve for two consecutive weeks—one



week in the district camp and one week assisting with vacation Bible school in a district church.

The Southeastern, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Central districts plan to co-sponsor District Crusader teams in 1995.

Applications for District Crusader teams will be available from January 1 to January 31, and all materials must be returned **before February 15, 1995**. Young people who are interested in serving should request application forms. They will be notified if their district will not be sponsoring a team in 1995.

Applications

Applications for each type of summer service will be available during the dates mentioned above. Request applications by writing: 1995 Summer Ministries, 524 College Ave., Ashland, OH 44805. Prospective applicants should request forms for themselves only.

National BYIC Registration

Participants in any of the above programs who are 15 to 22 years of age must be registered members of National BYIC. For information about BYIC registration, contact: BYIC Registration, The Brethren Church, 524 College Avenue, Ashland, OH 44805.

BYIC Convention

In addition, all participants in these summer ministries who are 15 to 22 years of age are encouraged to attend the BYIC Convention, to be held August 7–11, 1995, in Ashland. The Convention fee for summer ministry participants will be covered by The Brethren Church. [✝]

Urban Immersion Experience

Would you like to be part of a cultural adventure in Washington, D.C., this coming summer? If so, you are invited to become part of an ***Urban Immersion Experience***. Join with the Leadership Development Commission and work with Pastor Rickey Bolden and the Southeast Christian Fellowship in this week of ministry and learning in our nation's capital.

The Urban Immersion Experience will begin Saturday evening, June 17, 1995, and run through Saturday morning, June 24. Participation will be limited to a team of ten members.

During the week, team members will have an opportunity to participate in:

- Evangelism;
- Ministry to the community (hunger shelter or similiar ministry) during the day;
- A day of sightseeing;
- Leadership development training every evening, led by Dr. Mary Ellen Drushal;
- **Alive** worship services.

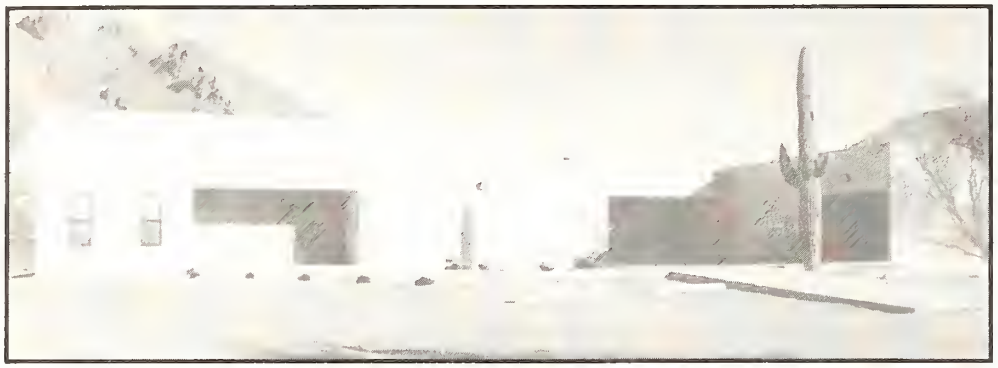
Each team member will be required to raise his or her own support ($150.00), plus travel expense to and from Washington, D.C. All team members will also be required to do some assigned preparatory reading on the subject of urban ministry prior to the trip.

The Urban Immersion Experience is designed for adult participation. However, youth who have completed at least their junior year in high school are welcome to apply. All youth 16 to 22 years of age must be accompanied by an adult.

This would be a particularly good ministry opportunity for joint participation by a young person and an adult who are working together in a mentoring relationship. This week of ministry and leadership training promises to be a life-changing experience that will provide team members an opportunity to observe inner-city living up close and personal.

If you are interested in participating in the Urban Immersion Experience or would like more information, please call the Brethren Church National Office at 419-289-1708. [✝]





Brethren at Northwest Chapel Dedicate New Fellowship Hall and Education Wing

Tucson, Ariz. — The Body of Believers at Northwest Brethren Chapel in Tucson had something much better than a Halloween party on Sunday, October 30, when they gathered to celebrate the completion of their new fellowship hall and education wing and to dedicate the building to the Lord's service.

The 4,300-square-foot addition contains a 25-foot by 60-foot fellowship hall, five classrooms, an office for the pastor, and two restrooms. The handicapped-accessible, single-story building is of wood-frame construction with stucco exterior. The approximate cost of the building was only $100,000, since some of the materials were donated and most of the labor was done by members of the congregation.

The celebration and dedication for this new addition began at 5:00 p.m. with a sit-down dinner. The bounty of God's provision was evident from the sumptuous meal of roast beef, turkey, ham, and various side dishes.

Following the meal, the celebration moved to the sanctuary, where Pastor David West led the congregation in acknowledging and applauding the many servants who had helped to make the day a reality. A truly moving moment occurred when Mr. Chuck Wilson received a prolonged standing ovation in appreciation of his part in the project. As project supervisor, he was the glue that held everything together and the one who kept everyone on track.

Acknowledging that everyone stands on the shoulders of those who have gone before, the congregation also gave special recognition to the church's founding pastor, Rev. Bill Curtis, and his wife Fran, as well as to the charter members who were present, acknowledging them as the true visionaries of the work at Northwest Chapel.

The worship team then led the gathering in a medley of songs of praise and worship, setting the stage for the messages to follow. Rev. Russell Gordon, Director of U.S. Ministries and Church Growth for The Brethren Church, brought greetings and a challenge to the congregation. He noted that Northwest Chapel will be successfully going off Home Mission support as of December 31 of this year.

Dr. Mary Ellen Drushal, academic dean of Ashland Theological Seminary, then presented the dedicatory address. Her message, "Upon This Rock," challenged the Northwest Chapel Brethren to work with the same passion that Peter displayed when he willingly "got out of the boat." She also called upon the congregation to "use this new building lavishly" in the service of Christ.

That a tremendous time was had by all was evidenced by the fact that no one left the 3½-hour service before the final "Amen."

— reported by Pastor David West

An Expression of Gratitude

The Brethren of Northwest Chapel in Tucson, Ariz., would like to thank all those who made this project (construction of a fellowship hall and education wing) possible. As the 1994 recipient of the Growth Partner Club call, we recognize that the gifts of the faithful have enabled us to complete this project. For those of our brothers and sisters who have participated in the Growth Partner Club call, we heartily thank you! It could not have been done without you!

There is still much yet to do—finish landscaping, pave the parking lot, and outfit the classrooms. To our brothers and sisters in the faith, if you have not yet participated in the Growth Partner Club call, there is still time. Your generosity and faithfulness to see God's kingdom advance here in the Southwest is truly the reality that we are in this together.

We, your brethren at Northwest Chapel, thank you with all our heart. "God can testify how [we] long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 1:8).

In His Grip,
The Brethren at Northwest Chapel



Part of the crowd of people who attended the dedication service for Northwest Chapel's new fellowship hall and education wing, including (foreground, l. of center) speakers Rev. Russell Gordon and Dr. Mary Ellen Drushal.

Temptation is the devil looking through the keyhole. Yielding is opening the door and inviting him in.

— Billy Sunday

Missionary Board Calls Rev. Reilly Smith To Become Its Next Executive Director

Ashland, Ohio — Rev. Reilly Smith has been called by the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church to become its next Executive Director.

Rev. Smith will succeed Rev. James R. Black, who is retiring as Executive Director of the Missionary Board effective May 29, 1995. Rev. Black has served in this position since January 1985.

Rev. Smith has served since 1985 as pastor of the Mulvane, Kans., Brethren Church. He is also this year's General Conference moderator.

Born in Garfield Heights, Ohio, Smith (41) is a 1971 graduate of North Olmsted (Ohio) High School, has an associates degree from Cuyahoga Community College in Cleveland, Ohio, and a Bachelor of Science degree in Bible from Valley Forge Christian College in Phoenixville, Pa. He also attended Ashland Theological Seminary, from which he received a Master of Divinity degree in 1985. While in college and seminary, he served several different congregations as interim or student pastor, including a period as student pastor of the Williamstown, Ohio, First Brethren Church in 1985.



Rev. Reilly Smith

In addition to his college and seminary education, Smith has also received training in law enforcement at the Ohio State Park Ranger Academy and the Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center, and instruction in the D.A.R.E (Drug Awareness Resistance Education) program at the Los Angeles Police Department. As a result, along with his pastoral responsibilities at the Mulvane Brethren Church, he served as an officer, chaplain, and D.A.R.E. officer with the Mulvane Police Department.

Smith is no novice to Brethren missions, having served on the Missionary Board from 1987 to the present. He also served on the board's budget committee from 1991 to 1993.

Since March 31, 1973, Smith has been married to the former Cynthia K. Hall of Madison, Ohio. The Smiths have four children, Jofaya (21), Kara (19), Sean (18), and Catrinna (10).

Rev. Smith plans to accompany Rev. Black on a visit to Brethren mission work in India and Malaysia in January and February. He will then officially begin his work in Ashland in March.

Ordination Service for Willim R. Cruz, Jr., Held August 19th at Bloomingdale Brethren Church

Valrico, Fla. — William R. Cruz, Jr., was set apart as a Brethren elder and his wife, Theresa, was set apart as the wife of an elder in a special worship service held August 19 at the Bloomingdale Brethren Church in Valrico.

Rev. David Stone, pastor of the Bloomingdale Church, gave the sermon for the service. Brethren elders Rev. Phil Lersch and Dr. J.D. Hamel assisted with the ordination. Also participating in the service were the new elder's father, Rev. William Cruz, Sr., who is pastor of the Good Samaritan Mission in Ruskin, Fla.; and Rev. Bill Thompson, former pastor of the church where the Cruzes had been members.

William Cruz, Jr., received a Master of Arts degree from Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Miss. Though Presbyterian in background, he has attended the Bloomingdale Brethren Church for a number of years and currently serves the church as Pastoral Counselor. He had been licensed by the Florida District of The Brethren Church for several years and was approved for ordination by that district and the National Ordination Council. In addition to his responsibilities with the Bloomingdale Church, he works as a counselor at Child and Family Outreach Services.



Rev. David Stone, pastor of the Bloomingdale Brethren Church, officiates during the setting-apart service, for William and Theresa Cruz (facing him), as other elders prepare to assist.

He is married to the former Theresa Showalter, who grew up attending the Bradenton, Fla., Brethren Church and the Sarasota, Fla., First Brethren Church. Bill and Theresa have two children—Jonathan (9) and Courtney (5), and at the present time Theresa is a full-time homemaker.

"The Bloomingdale Brethren Church is thankful for the ministry of this family," said Pastor David Stone. "Bill has provided valuable ministry to the people of the church and to all the people of Brandon and Valrico. God willing, he will continue to do so as one of the newest Brethren elders."

— reported by Pastor David Stone

Goshen Brethren Church Hosts Annual Brethren Hymn Sing

Goshen, Ind. — Brethren from six area churches gathered at the Goshen First Brethren Church on Sunday evening, October 16, for the annual Brethren Hymn Sing.

Members of the Ardmore, Elkhart, Jefferson, Mishawaka, New Paris, and Goshen Brethren Churches shared in a time of singing traditional hymns as well as newer Christian songs. They were also treated to special music by musicians from the various congregations.

Following the hymn sing, cookies and punch were served in the fellowship hall, giving the Brethren an opportunity to mingle and chat.

— reported by Anna Bollinger

First Worship Service Held on November 13th At the New Brethren Church in Medina, Ohio

Medina, Ohio — The first public* worship service of the new Brethren Church of Medina was held on Sunday morning, November 13, with 80 people in attendance.

The service was held in the multi-purpose room of the Ella Canavan Grade School on the south side of Medina (about 35 miles northeast of Ashland). This new multi-purpose room (completed just this past summer) provides an ideal facility for the worship services, and the school is located on the edge of a rapidly-growing area of Medina.

Pastor of the new Medina church is Thomas E. Sprowls, a senior at Ashland Theological Seminary. A 1983 graduate of Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Sprowls spent eight years in the U.S. Army before entering the seminary in 1991. Both he and his wife Deborah grew up in Berlin, Pennsylvania, where they are members of the Berlin Brethren Church.

Of the 80 people at the first service, 25 were from the Medina area. Some of the others were relatives of Pastor and Mrs. Sprowls from Pennsylvania, and the rest were visitors and a core group of church-planting volunteers from Ashland. Approximately 25 people from Ashland—Park Street and University Church members and Brethren students at Ashland Theological Seminary—are serving as a core group of volunteers who are serving in various capacities (nursery, children's program, youth leaders, worship leaders, ushers, drama ministry) during the planting stages of this new congregation.

The Brethren Church of Medina is a cooperative church-planting effort of the national Missionary Board of the Brethren Church, the Ohio District Mission Board, and Ashland Theological Seminary (through a course taught this fall at the seminary by Dr. Dale Stoffer, with students in the class participating in the initial stages of the church-planting process). In the new spirit of cooperation among Brethren in church-planting, financial support for the new church is also coming from the Central and Pennsylvania Districts. Generous financial support is also coming from the home church of Pastor and Mrs. Sprowls in Berlin.

In preparation for the start of this new Brethren church, approximately 6,000 calls were made to phones in Medina, using "The Phone's for You" method. By this means, a mailing list of approximately 400 addresses was developed of unchurched people who were open to receiving information about the new church. Most of the telephoning was done by volunteers from the three Brethren churches in Ashland (Park Street, University, and Garber) and by seminary students, using a bank of phones at Ashland University. But in a show of interest and support from the Central District, some of the phone calls were made from the Milledgeville, Ill., Brethren Church by Central District Mission Board members and other volunteers from that district.



Michelle DeLaughter and Kurt Stout (playing guitar), two of the core group of volunteers, lead a chorus during the preparatory service that was held the Sunday before the first public worship service of the new Brethren Church of Medina.

*A preparatory worship service was held at the same location the previous Sunday (on November 6), but it was not a public service since it was only for the core group of volunteers who are helping with various ministries of the new church during the planting stage.

Rev. Robert and Alberta Holsinger, two Ashland Park Street members who planned to serve as volunteers at Medina, were injured in a one-car accident while returning to Ashland from Medina following the preparatory worship service held November 6. The Holsingers spent more than a week in the hospital and are now recuperating at home. Mrs. Holsinger, who had volunteered to lead the children's program, suffered several broken ribs and a broken heel, and will be off her feet for about three months. Rev. Holsinger received cuts and bruises above his eyes, which have now healed, but he continues to experience back pain and has difficulty walking. Pray for their full recovery.



Falls City, Nebr. — *Shown with a banner that the First Brethren Church of Falls City entered in this year's community "Cobblestone Parade" are (l. to r.) Emily Wheeler, Robert Wagner, Janice Wheeler, Zola Shipman, Buck Wing, and Rob and Kaylynn Wheeler. Serving as the committee to make the banner were Rob and Janice Wheeler, with help from local artist and First Brethren member Robert Wagner and from Zola Shipman, wife of Pastor William Shipman.*

— reported by Audrey A. Bennett

Little Crusader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

Hi Boys and Girls!

Let's see if you can guess this riddle: What is red and white and striped all over? Need more hints? It's a sweet treat to eat and is often hung on Christmas trees. Did you guess the answer? It's a candy cane!

Do you know that there is a Christian legend about the candy cane? Here is the story.

According to this story, the first candy canes were made hundreds of years ago (in the seventh century) by a Christian in the country of England. At that time, the rulers would not allow people to celebrate Christmas openly, the way we do today. So a candy maker made a candy shaped like a shepherd's crook, to be a secret symbol of Jesus, the Good Shepherd.

Look carefully at a candy cane. The three small stripes represent God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. These stripes remind us that God is really three in one. The red stripe also has a special meaning. It represents the life of Jesus, the blood that He shed so that we might have life in Him.

Isn't it great that this candy maker made not only a sweet treat, but one that is a wonderful symbol to help us remember the true meaning of Christmas!

Word Search

Hidden in the letters below is every word in the verse at the bottom of the page. Find and circle each word.

R	H	R	K	F	H	A	U	M	S
E	I	N	M	T	H	E	V	E	C
A	G	T	R	B	F	G	K	N	T
F	H	A	Z	T	W	L	M	A	H
P	E	A	C	E	L	G	C	L	G
H	S	R	P	I	T	O	H	P	S
I	T	O	W	A	R	D	H	O	E
O	E	J	N	N	M	N	L	N	K
S	G	O	O	D	G	L	O	R	Y

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."
Luke 2:14



Pastor Bill Yoder Gets Unexpected Morning Off On Pastor Appreciation Day at Valley Church

Jones Mills, Pa. — Rev. Bill Yoder got an unexpected morning off Sunday, October 23, when the congregation took over the worship service at the Valley Brethren Church in celebration of Pastor (and Family) Appreciation Day.

Everything was going along as usual until the "Prayer and Praise" portion of the service, during which Moderator Steve Nemeth told Pastor Yoder that the congregation was giving him the day off. The entire family (including wife Jane, son Eric, and daughter Annie) were presented flowers, and then Pastor Bill was asked to sit down, relax, and enjoy the service.



Pastor Bill and Jane Yoder with son Eric (r.) and daughter Annie.

Various members of the congregation took part in the service by leading the singing of some of Pastor Bill's favorite hymns, reading passages of Scripture, offering prayers, and presenting special music and poems. One of the highlights of the service was a poem entitled "There Once Was a Man From Meyersdale" (Pastor Yoder's home town), written and read by Michelle Stonebraker especially for the Yoder family.

During the hymn of invitation, a young man came to the altar to accept Jesus Christ as his Savior. Everyone said that this was a perfect way for the service to end. Tears of joy and happiness filled Pastor Bill's and Jane's eyes during the service and throughout the day.

After the service, 90 of the 110 people who had attended the worship service enjoyed a Harvest Home/Appreciation Dinner. During the program that followed the meal, the Valley BYIC presented a comical skit about all the things they have learned from Pastor Bill during the worship services.

Special gifts presented to the pastoral family by the church included a *New International Version Study Bible* for Pastor Bill, a set of Christmas pattern dishes for Jane, and gift certificates for Eric and Annie. The Yoders also received numerous other gifts from the Sunday school classes and congregation, including a gift certificate for a family portrait; a small, decorated "Appreciation" tree; a handmade plaque; and lots of cards. In addition, during November various members of the congregation did something special for the pastoral family.

In reporting this special event, correspondent LaVerne Keslar wrote, "We were happy to be able to honor the pastor and [his] family for their six years of unselfish commitment to the body of Christ at Jones Mills."

— reported by LaVerne Keslar; photos by Vera Schroyer



A special feature of the appreciation service was a song for Pastor Yoder by the "Sonshine Kids."

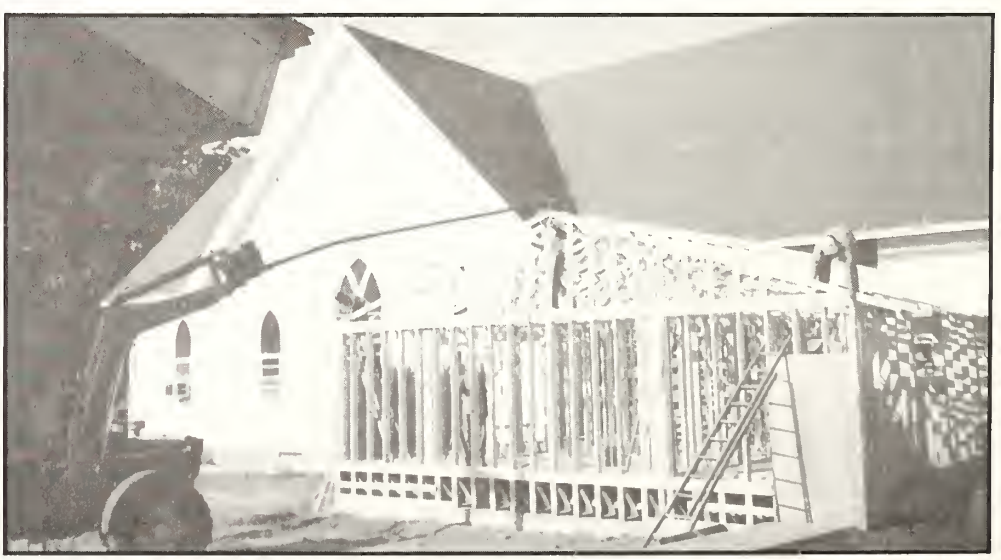
Addition Under Construction At Lanark Brethren Church

Lanark, Ill. — Construction is underway on a new addition to the meeting facility of the Lanark First Brethren Church.

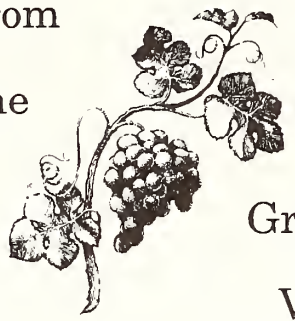
The 28-foot by 32-foot building with basement will include handicapped-accessible restrooms and a nursery area, with classroom or meeting space available in the basement.

Total cost of the project is expected to be $40,000, more than half of which has been given by the congregation. Much of the construction work is being done by members of the church.

— reported by Sue Michael; photo by Rev. Robert Schubert



From The Grape Vine



John and Shirley Ewing and **Ivon and Shirley Miller** were recently ordained as deacon couples in the Lanark, Ill., First Brethren Church. Rev. David Cooksey, Director of Pastoral Ministries for The Brethren Church, presided at the ordination service.

Bill and Ellen Bontrager, former members of the Winding Waters Brethren Church of Elkhart, Ind., and speakers at the 1991 Brethren Pastors' Conference, are now teaching and sharing their faith in Moscow, Russia. Mr. Bontrager teaches in the Moscow State University Law School, where Mikhail Gorbachev studied in the 1950s. His teaching duties have brought him into contact with numerous key leaders in the Russian Parliament and the Russian Supreme Court. In addition to their teaching responsibilities, Ellen leads a women's Bible study group and Bill leads sessions in a local church on conflict resolution.

In Memory

Miss Susie Fitzgerald, 96, November 14. Member for 79 years of the Oak Hill First Brethren Church, where she served on the first Pastoral Committee; as Sunday school superintendent, secretary, and teacher; and as assistant church treasurer. Services by Pastor William Skeldon.

Ina Cook, 91, October 30. Member for 26 years of the Waterloo Hammond Avenue Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Ronald L. Waters.

Robert M. Kimmel, 85, October 29. Member since 1950 and deacon of the Dayton Hillcrest Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Kenneth P. Clarkston.

Vernon Dietz, 78, October 26. Member for 52 years of the Waterloo Hammond Avenue Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Ronald L. Waters.

Betty Mox, 68, October 21. Member of The Brethren Church at New Lebanon. Services by Pastor James Black.

Harvey Teeter, 98, October 18. Member of the Vinco Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Jerry Fike.

Essie Rickard, 89, October 17. Attended the Maurertown Brethren Church for more than 50 years, where she taught Sunday school for 25 years and was a member of the W.M.S. Services by Pastor Richard Craver and Rev. Wendell Shurtz.

Goldenaires

Jay and Jeanette Hoffman, 50th, November 4. Members of the Waterloo Hammond Avenue Brethren Church.

Weddings

Tina Curfman to **Jon Ward**, November 5, at the North Georgetown First Brethren Church; Pastor Fred Brandon officiating. Bride a member of the North Georgetown First Brethren Church.

Michelle Welsh to **William Iske**, October 8, at the Lanark First Brethren Church; Rev. David Cooksey officiating. Groom a member of the Lanark First Brethren Church.

Tricia Ewing to **Todd Poffenberger**, September 30, at the Lanark First Brethren Church; Rev. David Cooksey officiating. Members of the Lanark First Brethren Church.

Geneva Oburn to **Anthony Price**, August 13, in the Ashland University Memorial Chapel; Eugene Oburn, father of the bride, officiating, assisted by Rev. Paul Tinkel. Members of The Brethren Church at New Lebanon and bride a former member of the Pleasant Hill First Brethren Church.

Membership Growth

Elkhart: 1 by baptism, 9 by transfer

Cheyenne: 1 by baptism, 2 by transfer

Gala Get-Together Planned For Brethren West of the Mississippi



Howdy y'all! We want y'all to know that plans are set for the first Great Western Brethren Roundup. This event will take place June 23–25, 1995, at Longs Peak Inn near the community of Estes Park, Colorado, at the entrance to the Rocky Mountain National Park.

This is a beautiful location for the inauguration of this special event, and Western Brethren will get a chance to view a very special area of God's creation. In June, the mountains are still capped with snow, foliage is a lush shade of green, and the lakes and streams are a sparkling blue. Estes Park provides a multitude of shops and stores for the "shop-till-you-drop" crowd, as well as horseback-riding and other amusements for younger buckaroos who may attend the Roundup. On Saturday afternoon of the Roundup, families will have an opportunity to tour Estes Park and to experience the grandeur of the Rocky Mountains.

The purpose of the Great Western Brethren Roundup is to provide Brethren from churches west of the Mississippi River an opportunity to gather for fellowship and worship and a chance to meet other Brethren as well as staff members from The Brethren Church national offices. Since most members of the Western Brethren churches are too far from Ashland to attend General Conference, the Roundup will provide them an opportunity to share together as the family of Brethren believers and to become personally aware of the common bonds that tie us together.

The Roundup will begin on Friday evening, June 23, with worship, then conclude at noon on Sunday with a luncheon following the morning worship service. The program for the Roundup, which will be finalized at the January 10–12, 1995, meeting of the Western Brethren Pastors, will include presentations from local churches and western districts, introductions to the work of the national Brethren ministries, and workshops on subjects of mutual concern, church planting, and possible cooperative work among Western Brethren. Saturday evening will be a special event, with the Great Western Brethren Bar-b-que.

Cost for the event will be $83 per person ($50 for children under age 9, with an additional price break for younger children). This includes lodging, five meals (including the Great Western Brethren Bar-b-que), and use of the meeting room. Space is not available in the Inn for those wanting to arrive early or stay longer, but there are plenty of motels and inns in the area. Information on these may be obtained by calling the Estes Park Chamber of Commerce. This is an excellent location for a family vacation.

Registration applications and information packets will be available after January 1 from Rev. Bill Brady, 201 N. Columbus Blvd., Tucson, AZ 85711. The number of registrations is limited. Brethren from Western churches are especially encouraged to attend, but Brethren from the East are also welcome to come and experience some Western hospitality. [⇧]



Christmas Past, Present, and Future

Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* is a beloved classic. Nearly everyone knows of Mr. Scrooge's nightmares and how they softened his heart and produced a person of generosity. In fact, to be called "a Scrooge" is quite an insult.

During the month of December, in "Christmases past," Brethren people have shown they are not Scrooge's by giving generously in support of Brethren Church Ministries. Though achieving a tax advantage may be a motivation for some, most gifts are given out of love and thanksgiving for God's greatest gift of all—the Lord Jesus Christ.

Through Brethren Church Ministries, we are able to do together in cooperative ministry what would be impossible (or at least difficult) for one or even a few local churches to accomplish alone.

The General Conference Executive Council (GCEC) and The Brethren Church National Office staff are committed to advancing the cause of Christ through Brethren Church denominational ministries. But that is possible only through the faithful and generous support of Brethren people like yourself.

Your "Christmas present" this month will not only show you are not "a Scrooge"; it will also make possible new and expanding ministries for every "Christmas future." Thank you for your partnership through your prayers and your financial support.

Send your gift to:

The Brethren Church
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